

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



WILD THYMES

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

MARCH 2010

WINTER/SPRING GREETINGS

Dear Folks,

This month of March, which came in as winter and is leaving as spring, has me thinking about transitions. You know, when we pass from one area of focus to another. We certainly have noticed March coming in like a lion, but going out like a lamb. And transitions do not abound just in nature; they occur all around us. For example, in the world of print, the skilled writer creates the last sentence in a paragraph as a lead in, as a transition, to the first sentence of the next paragraph. Perhaps those of us in the world of herbs could take a cue from other worlds to create a more successful transition process for the Herb of the Year (HOTY) as one herb ends its reign and another begins its HOTY reign.

Nowhere in the herb use worlds (perfumes, soaps, candles, dyes, crafts, medicinal, culinary) is the change from one HOTY to the next HOTY more intensely felt than in the culinary arena. I've been acutely aware of this need for a HOTY transition process because for almost three months, when I have served a new dish at my house, my husband who, all last year kept asking, "Does this have bay in it?" is now asking, with self-correction, "Does this have bay? No, that was last year. Does this have dill in it?" The man needs a transition period to say goodbye to one HOTY and to welcome another. And I do not think he is alone in his need.

Last week, as I was reading through Susan McClure's **Culinary Gardens: From Design to Palate**, searching for a recipe that utilized both bay and dill, I actually found a recipe that met this criteria. I was very pleased with my find. Imagine my surprise when, the next day, before I had told anyone of my discovery, Annette shared a recipe for the newsletter . . . You guessed it. Her recipe from a newspaper also is a transition recipe. Each of the recipes, "Mushroom Soup With Pelmeni (Russian Dumplings)" and "Dilled-Cheese and Potato Soup" is found on page 6.

I think I am now going to start my search for my 2011 dill and horseradish transitional recipes to go with the bloody marys.

My wish for you, as you experience your personal and herb garden transitions this year, is that you enjoy the process.

Herbally yours,

Diane L.M. Wittig, Editor



Dill

Anethum Graveolens

Herb of the Year

Did you know . . .

that while native to

the Mediterranean

countries, this lulling

herb also grows in

India and North

America?

BIRTHDAY:

- *March 18, Diane*

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FEBRUARY MINUTES

By Annette Steger, Acting Secretary

The February make-up meeting was held at the Paul Smith Library in Shrewsbury because the accumulated snow created a lack of parking facilities at our regular meeting place. We started the evening with the educational program. Pat Sweetman led us in the preparation of hand cream. She took the opportunity to explain about jojoba oil and the plant it comes from.

The business meeting was called to order at 8pm. The minutes were accepted as published in the newsletter.

Treasury Report

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$559.07.

Old Business

There will be a plant exchange at the Paul Smith Library on May 22, 2010. The hours for the plant exchange have not yet been established. The process will be that we each bring extra plants that we have removed from our own gardens. Each plant needs to be in a pot and labeled with its common and scientific name as well as its planting environment. We can then pick different plants that we don't have. It is like a cookie exchange. The Unit plans to provide a plug of dill for each of the participants.

Pat explained the publications that come with membership to our three guests. She also stated that we must get our symposium information in the next issue of the Herb Society of America Newsletter. The next deadline is April 10. Pat Herbert will bring the information for Annette to the next meeting.

Helping at the National Botanical Garden in Washington was briefly discussed. Patti is available that day.

Diane reported on the Web page progress. She is in the process of forwarding pictures, newsletters, and recipes to Kevin who is working on our web site.

The first May Herb Sale, which we do at the Lion's Club event, is May 15. We directed Diane to see if the O'Shea Lumber site sale can be the same day as the plant exchange because the last weekend in May(29th) is the National Meeting and Pat Sweetman and Gerrie, who will be attending that event in Tennessee, will not be available to help. The 29th is also the Baltimore Herb Festival.

There were several questions about the By-Laws. 1. Are local units tax exempt by virtue of being part of the national Organization? Pat will check on that. 2. We discussed the wisdom of having a Ways and Means Chairman added to our officers. 3. It was decided that the elections will be held each June so there can be an overlap of learning time for the new officers. The 2nd revision will be brought for vote in March.

Pat Sweetman asked that each officer write up in detail what that officer does.

New Business

Pat Sweetman presented information about the request by Ron Grove of the Plough Tavern for our local unit to partner with them to do the following things:

1. Be caretaker of the plants around the border of the Colonial vegetable garden.
2. Train docents.
3. Train Junior docents (High School age).
4. Do demonstrations, when appropriate.
5. Specifically have some plants for sale Mothers' Day and have ongoing demos that day.
6. Participate in the Arts Fest in August.

Those members present agreed we should grab this opportunity.

We have come to the end of our assigned refreshment schedule. We agreed to ask Gerrie to provide the refreshments for March and then have members sign up for the next meetings for at least 6 months.

We agreed to skip the Fall "Under the Arbor" program for Fall of 2010 as we are very busy planning and working on our Symposium.

Thanks to Diane for preparing the M-D U picture brochure and dill business cards for the visitor envelopes which we will be giving to our guests.

Ongoing Business

Symposium planning meetings will be the 2nd Thursday of the next few months.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:50pm.

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

UPDATE: Our 1st Symposium meeting was held at Diane's home, March 1st, and I think we made great progress for our Fall Gathering. Everything seems to be falling into place. I will make the changes to our agenda and bring it to our March 18th meeting. Diane is creating a flyer for us to take to Greensboro. We agreed on some giveaways. Now we need to brainstorm for some fundraisers (besides our herb sales) to pay for these. Pat S. is contacting the Revolution to see if they have openings for their baseball season.

Everyone is bringing a sample of an herbal appetizer or dessert to our next meeting so we can start deciding what to make for our hospitality event on Friday night of the symposium.

It has been decided that our symposium meetings will be held on the first Monday of each month. Our next meeting will be at Candy's home on April 5th.



FINANCIAL REPORT

By Pat Herbert, Treasurer

Checkbook balance is \$598.22

Checks written in February 2010 were:

- Diane - \$30.85 for supplies
- Pat S.- \$30.00 for bird bath to be used as auction item for Spring Social Symposium in Greensboro

HISTORIC HAPPENINGS--CANDY RIDDLE

I am in the process of preserving the history of the Mason-Dixon Unit of the Herb Society of America. I have some articles and some clippings from local papers, but if anyone has any contributions she would like to make to the "historical record", please bring them to the next meeting.

FIELD TRIP--EASTERN MARKET, KOHL'S, & FLOWER SHOW

By Annette Steger

These days of higher costs we modern women are aware that consolidating trips is a wise technique. Diane and I did this quite expediently last Friday.

Thursday night Diane called to see if I wanted to come along with her to the Eastern Farm Market since she was going for bread. I replied that I had a trip planned to York for The Mid-Atlantic Garden Show—a tradition for me to kick off the growing season. A little further discussion uncovered the fact that we both needed some things that were on sale at Kohl's.

One car, two women, three locations-- It was as easy as 1,2,3! I was at Diane's House by 9:20 AM. We took freezer chests to store perishable items and a cart to ease carrying items at the market and the garden show. We started with the market, where we stocked up on fresh vegetables for the weekend and delighted in the sights and smells. Interestingly, there was an



This "Herb Tree" was the focal point for promoting this year's April 16-17, 2010 Pennsylvania Herb Festival.

abundance of both fresh and dried herbs present. Kohl's was our second stop, and we practiced our math skills there as well as our restraint.

The third stop yielded several ideas for vendors for our fall symposium as well as a modest number of herbs and other plants, some gifts for birthdays and Christmas 2010, and enjoyment of the beautiful displays of outdoor living spots which included flowers, shrubs, trees, little streams and fountains, and even some grassy areas. Also, patios, walkways, and stone and brick creations called to us to linger there. Music, in the form of a live harp player, enhanced one large display. Vendors at one booth had CD's of soothing musical arrangements for sale, along with their herbal products.

Remember— 1, 2, 3— use technology and resources wisely, delight in friendship, and indulge in what nature gives us.

FAMILY STORIES FROM A FARM GIRL

Cutting daffodils

By Annette Steger

As some of you are well aware, old farmhouses can be challenging. Indeed, the ninety-acre farm my parents purchased in the early 1940's for \$6,000.00 had an unfinished second floor, and it had an outhouse that was still a functioning feature at that point. Soon, with a family on the way, John and Sarah Mae started the construction on the second floor. The bathroom was the priority and was put in straight ahead from the top of the stairs, overlooking a pound sweet apple tree. The bedrooms gradually took shape and were getting their finishing touches while my sister was on the way.

Being the first child, I found ways to amuse myself. One beautiful spring day I decided that Mother and Dad were working very hard and needed some encouragement. I found a cardboard box and a pair of scissors and cut many daffodils with about 1 inch stems, and I placed them in the box and proudly carried them to my working parents. They weren't quite as overjoyed as I thought they would be, and as a result, I never cut daffodil flowers quite like that again, although I have cut many daffodils over the years to enhance our indoor living space.



Thinking of the daffodils though, brings wonderful memories to mind of large flowerbeds of daffodils of several varieties waving in the spring breezes. Shortly before the daffodils, of course, there had been many crocuses peaking up to chase away those winter blues. Tulips soon arrived on the scene. Later, a beautiful bleeding heart plant filled the corner of an old foundation in the back yard. A white hibiscus plant is still growing today at the intersection of the original barn and the cow stable that Dad added on.

My heart is warmed as my nephew experiments in the garden plots on that same property. I plan to expand his gardening skills and experimentation abilities with the gift of some herb plants later on this growing season.

A WORD FROM HSA--

The following HSA information was recently received from headquarters by Kathy Schlosser, Mid-Atlantic district delegate, and forwarded to Pat S.

On the HSA Web Site, under the tab **SHOP**, in the drop down box you will see under Amazon.com a link to Botanical Interests and Richter's Herbs. These links are part of the affiliate program that we have with both of these companies.

HSA members who order from Richter's will receive a 10% discount when placing an order by phone or via the mail and use the code **HSA33**. Currently, they are working on a new web site that will have a place to enter the code, but that is not working yet. So to receive the HSA member discount, orders **cannot** be placed on-line.

GREAT TRANSITION soups WITH BAY AND DILL

Enjoy either of these substantial soups on a cold day!

Mushroom soup with Pelmeni (Russian Dumplings)

INGREDIENTS FOR SOUP BASE

1	small	yellow onion	2	t	extra-virgin olive oil
2	14 oz.	cans reduced sodium chicken broth	1	cup	peeled and shredded russet potatoes
1	whole	bay leaf	1/3	cup	low-fat milk
1	cup	water			Salt and ground black pepper to taste

INGREDIENTS FOR DUMPLINGS

24		wonton wrappers	7	oz.	jar roasted red peppers, drained/diced
2	T	canola oil	1/2	cup	sour cream
8	oz.	cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced	2	T	chopped fresh dill

DIRECTIONS

Peel and **cut** onion in half, lengthwise.

Finely **chop** half of the onion, and **set** aside.

In large pot, **combine** remaining onion half with the broth, bay leaf, and water. **Bring** to boil, and then **reduce** heat to simmer. Partially **cover** and **simmer** for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in small skillet **heat** olive oil and **sauté** chopped onion for 10 minutes.

Add potatoes and cook until tender, about 8 minutes.

Stir in milk and simmer until most of liquid is absorbed-about 2 minute longer.

Transfer potato mixture to a bowl, mash with fork until chunky, and season to taste.

Divide wonton wrappers into stacks of 4. With 3 inch round biscuit cutter, **cut** each stack into circles. **Place** heaping teaspoon of potato mixture in center of each circle. **Moisten** edges of circles with water, then **fold** in half, over filling, **pressing** edges together to create a seal.

In nonstick skillet, **heat** canola oil and **sear** dumplings for about 1 minute on each side.

Remove onion and bay leaf from simmering broth. **Add** mushrooms and dumpling to broth. **Increase** heat to medium and **simmer** dumplings until they are floating-about 3 to 4 minutes.

Yield: 4 servings

Dilled cheese and potato soup

INGREDIENTS:

2	T	butter	1	whole	bay leaf
2	T	olive oil	5	cups	chicken broth
2	cups	chopped onions	3	cups	peeled and chopped white potatoes
2	cups	chopped carrots	1 1/4	cups	chopped fresh dill
1	cup	chopped celery			Salt and pepper to taste
5	sprigs	parsley	2 1/2	cups	grated cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS:

Heat butter and oil in large soup kettle. **Cook** onions, carrots, and celery in mixture for 25 minutes.

Add chicken broth, potatoes, parsley sprigs, and bay leaf.

Bring to boil and simmer for 25-30 minutes until potatoes are tender.

Stir in chopped dill and remove from heat. **Remove** bay leaf and **strain** soup into heat-proof bowl.

Process vegetable in food processor. **Add** 1 cup of the cooking liquid and process until well-blended.

Return processed vegetables to soup kettle. **Warm** over low heat.

Taste, and **add** salt and pepper as needed. When heated through, **stir** in the grated cheese. **Serve** immediately.

Yield: 4-6 servings.

GREAT MEALS WITH CROCK POTS-

Crock pots, also known as slow cookers, are often referred to as the work horses in the kitchen because once you prepare the ingredients and turn on the crock pot, you can go about your business for the day, and return for a fully cooked meal. If you happen to have a couple of crock pots and throw in a couple large potatoes with either the roast or carrots in the recipes below, you will have a complete meal without continuous tending to the cooking throughout the day. Bon Appétit!

GREAT roast WITH DILL--Dilled Pot Roast

Submitted by Shirley Smith

INGREDIENTS:

3 to 3 1/2 lb beef pot roast	1 tbs vinegar
1 tsp salt	3 tbs flour
1/4 tsp pepper	1 tsp dill weed
1 tsp dill weed	1 cup dairy sour cream
1/4 cup water	

DIRECTIONS:

Sprinkle both sides of meat with salt, pepper, and 1 tsp dill.

Place in slow cooker.

Add water and vinegar.

Cover and cook on low for 7 to 9 hours or until tender.

Remove meat from pot.

Turn control to high.

Dissolve flour in small amount of cold water; **stir** into meat drippings.

Stir in additional 1 tsp of dill.

Cook on high about 10 minutes or until slightly thick.

Stir in sour cream; **turn** off heat.

Slice meat; **serve** with sauce.

Yield: Makes 6 to 7 servings.

GREAT CARROTS WITH DILL --Carrots in Dilled Wine Sauce

Submitted by Shirley Smith

INGREDIENTS:

8 medium carrots, cut into small sticks	1/4 tsp garlic salt
1/2 cup chicken bouillon	1 tbs lemon juice
1/2 cup dry white wine	2 tbs cornstarch
1/2 tsp dried dill weed	2 tbs cold water
2 tsp instant minced onion	

DIRECTIONS:

Place carrots in slow cooker.

Combine bouillon, wine, dill, onion, garlic salt, and lemon juice.

Pour over carrots.

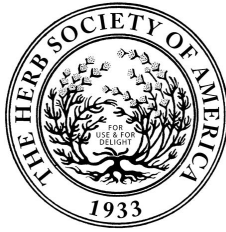
Cover and cook on high 2 to 3 hours.

Dissolve cornstarch in water.

Stir dissolved cornstarch carrot mixture.

Cook on high 10 minutes or until slightly thickened.

Yield: Makes 6 servings.



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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

- March 18 **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
Greensboro, 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 **Paul Smith Library Window Dressing Display**
80 Constitution Avenue, Shrewsbury, PA
Information: Annette Steger at stegeraj@aol.com
- May 15 **New Freedom Yard Sale**
Information: Pat H. at patricia.e.herbert@bankofamerica.com
- May 22 **Mason-Dixon Unit Herb Sale at O'Sheas Lumber**
11425 Susquehanna Trail, Glen Rock, PA
Information: Diane at dianelmwittig@hotmail.com
- May 22 **Paul Smith Library Plant Exchange**
80 Constitution Avenue
Shrewsbury, PA
Information: Pat S. at sweetman@stonehausfarm.net
- 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

- Patti A. Stinchcomb Guevara.....
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- Candy Riddle (Historian).....criddle@bcps.org
- Shirley Smith (Secretary).....sasjgr@aol.com
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- Diane L.M. Wittig (Newsletter Editor).....dianelmwittig@hotmail.com

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