

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



WILD THYMES

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3

APRIL 2010

EARLY SPRING GREETINGS

Dear Folks,

Last month as I was reflecting on transitions, I was thinking about gradual transitions . . . not dramatic changes. Yet, today, I have to admit that there has been no gentle gradual transition to the beginning of my herb garden season; there has been a dramatic early arrival of spring.

At nearly six decades old, I do not ever remember several days of 90 degree weather in April or my chives being more than 10 inches tall even after having been well used before the end of the first week of April. Even more amazing, I've never had French Tarragon winter over. My French Tarragon, which was presumed dead, spent its winter sitting in a pot along the side of my driveway, a victim of my failure to tidy up all my gardening pots at the end of the fall season. . . This plant is now 4 inches long-not tall. It seems to be growing along the ground rather than up.

This dramatic early arrival of spring, has given me multiple gifts of time. I get to enjoy the buds and flowers sooner, which will allow me a longer season for herb enjoyment. I am able to begin earlier in my gardening activities of raking and cleaning up the beds, which means when I am ready to plant, the beds will be waiting, and I'll have a longer growing season. I am now finding myself constantly reminding myself that I have to use restraint to not to set out my plants too soon, before the danger of frost has passed. As a result of the extended gardening season and the earlier in the season working time, I seem to have an elevated gardening enthusiasm. Specifically, I am working more quickly and will ultimately have more time to enjoy my herb garden.

I realize that our May 15 and May 22 herb sales are just around the corner . . . but with this wonderful weather and the popping of buds, I can't wait to have my plants at home with me . . . maybe when I'm at the PA Herb Festival next week I can buy some plants to tie me over until our herb sales.

You know, it's so good to be a member of an herb group that does outreach to the community via sales and educational booths. For more details about our sales and our participation at the PA Herb Festival, peek on pages 6 and 3.

My wish for you is that you also get to enjoy your extended herb season, the herbs and the people at our herb sales, and your time with folks at the PA Herb Festival.

Herbally yours,

Diane L.M. Wittig, Editor



Dill

Anethum Graveolens

Herb of the Year

Did you know . . . that in Pennsylvania, dill can be cultivated outdoors in a garden plot and/or in a container during the summer and during the winter indoors under lights and/or in sunny windows?

BIRTHDAY:

- *May 23, Annette*

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MARCH MINUTES

By Annette Steger, Acting Secretary

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

Treasury Report

Treasurer Pat Herbert reported a balance of \$644.72.

Business and Educational Program

Chair, Pat Sweetman, announced that she will be having back surgery on April 1st and will not be able to drive or do much of anything for six weeks.

We confirmed the dates of our Herb Sales: Saturday, May 15th at the New Freedom Lion's Club Yard Sale and Saturday, May 22nd at O'Shea Lumber on the Old Trail, close to Church Street in Glen Rock. These are the same sites as 2009. Shirley is to pick up herbs from Jason; Pat was considering riding along. Annette is to drive Sweetman's truck and go with Pat Herbert to pick up plants at Ada's.

Diane showed us the prototype for the magnet bookmarks and briefly explained the booklet she will do for our symposium attendees.

The Pennsylvania Herb Festival dates are Friday April 16th and Saturday April 17th, and the hours are Friday noon until 7 and Saturday 9-4.

We discussed a tentative work schedule for our educational booth at the event:

Friday	Time	Saturday	Time
Annette	Setup 9 Noon - 3	Diane & Gerrie	Open 8:30-1
Candy	11:30-4	Pat H& Kim	Close 1-4 & Tear down
Diane & Shirley	3-Close		

The display will include: Dill Board, fresh dill plants of various species (Patti provide), vase of fresh cut dill, flyer to hand out (advertising herb sales, dill facts, fall symposium ad, information on our unit), business cards which promote Dill as 2010 herb of the year and unit information, laminated booklet from our January meeting, any herb pottery, blue envelopes for very interested folks, packet for new members, HSA flyers.

The Web page is moving along. Diane asked if we can write Kevin Frey a check of \$50.00 now for his work on the website so far. It was decided Diane would be the webmaster and the current president should also be knowledgeable about the site.

The By-Laws were discussed with last month's suggestions and new ideas were added. (See 3rd revision email)

Candy presented an informative program on Snakeroot.

We enjoyed a variety of appetizers, the names of which Gerrie recorded, so we can make a reasonable decision about which items we will serve for the Fall Symposium. We will bring more appetizers for the next regular meeting.

We taped dill weed to about one half of our business cards for 2010.

Ongoing Business

The April symposium planning meeting will be held at the M-D Stonehaus site so that Pat Sweetman can attend for a while if she feels able.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

PA HERB FESTIVAL BOOTH UPDATE--APRIL 16 AND 17

From Annette Steger

Fellow members:

I am composing this message to bring special attention to the schedule for booth tending in the March minutes. **I think we need to revisit this schedule to make sure we have enough coverage.** On March 18, we thought Pat S could be there. The Festival seemed so far off at the March meeting, and here it is, happening the day after next week's monthly meeting.

Following these three points is The To Take List.

- **Can you think of anything else to add? (There is space at the end of the list).**
- **Where the line ends with a dash (-), that item needs someone's attention.**
- **Are you able to help with any of the needy items?**

The To Take List

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Green M-D U Aprons for attire-each brings her own | 14. Dill tri-fold board- Annette |
| 2. Several Sample Newsletters and ribbon to tie to table
-Diane | 15. 2 folding tables from meeting house- |
| 3. Laminated program from January meeting and ribbon to tie- | 16. 2 folding chairs from meeting house- |
| 4. Business cards from meeting house- | 17. Dill poster from Food & Wine magazine in stand-
Annette |
| 5. Flyers advertising the May Herb sales & Symposium
& herb facts-Diane to have 400 | 18. Dill plants-(Patti) |
| 6. Interested folks blue envelopes-Diane has 5 | 19. Vase of fresh cut dill- |
| 7. M-D unit joiners Welcome bags (?meeting house)- | 20. Jar of Dill pickles- |
| 8. Tablet to write on- | 21. Bag of Dill chips- |
| 9. Sticky notes- | 22. Bottle of dill vinegar- |
| 10. Pens- | 23. Masking tape- |
| 11. HSA Flyers (?meeting house)- | 24. Potting Table-Diane/Annette |
| 12. Herby Tablecloth from last year- Pat H? | 25. Raffle forms-Diane/Annette |
| 13. Drape Material- Annette | 26. _____ |
| | 27. _____ |

Thanks,
Annette

SNAKEROOT

By Pat Herbert



The March herb of the month for the Mason-Dixon Unit was Snakeroot (*Aceratina*). Candy Riddle did the research on this herb and presented some of the information she found to our unit. She created a very informative poster, which we will be sure to hold onto for future reference

Also known as Boneset, snakeroot appears to have multiple cultivated varieties. This herb is found mostly in the woods and brush thickets where it blooms white flowers in the late summer.

Snakeroot has been cultivated for medicinal uses since at least the middle ages, when it was used as a birthing herb.

Did you know that milk from cows which have eaten snakeroot can cause illness in people if they ingest too much of this milk because the milk becomes toxic? Too large a dose of snakeroot will cause nausea and gripping pains in one's bowels. As snakeroot is very toxic in large doses, it is not a herb for casual home use.



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

Our symposium plans are moving right along. We still have a few kinks to work out, but I feel we are right on track.

When visiting the social symposium in Greensboro, I received verbal confirmation for the following:

- Bobbie Champaign, who is now chairperson of the NC Unit has approved that her group will do the table arrangements.
- Hopefully, Mary Johnson will not have to work that weekend for she has agreed to be our auctioneer.

Gail Seely was not at the social, but has agreed to do the registration along with making nametags.

I wish to thank everyone for all the contributions and time.

Our next symposium meeting will be held at Candy's home on Monday, May 3rd. At this meeting I would like to focus on the time line so we know exactly what each month going forward will entail.



FINANCIAL REPORT

By Pat Herbert, Treasurer

Checkbook balance as of 3/30/10 is: \$573.40.

FIELD TRIP--2010 SOCIAL SYMPOSIUM GREENSBORO, NC

By Pat Herbert

Pat S. and I traveled to Greensboro, NC for the social symposium this past weekend. It was a most pleasant trip. We drove Pat's little car and traveled the less highway route with the top down, our gray hair blowing in the wind. What fun!

Our first stop was in a little town in Virginia called Berryville (approximately 95 miles away). We ate lunch at a restaurant called Jane's Place that was established in 1942. The décor was still from 1942, and the food was good. After lunch we strolled down Main Street and found a wonderful used book store where we spent over an hour looking around. The book store had a large selection of garden books. We had to sort through our pickings as the little car has a very small truck. I would recommend this destination to anyone.

We arrived at the hotel, unpacked, and had dinner at an Indian restaurant Thursday night. This was my first experience with Indian food, and my taste palettes enjoyed it immensely.

Friday morning we met in the lobby of the hotel and carpooled to Seagrove to visit some potteries. I was unaware of how many potteries they had in that community. We watched a demonstration by Ben Owens of making a piece of pottery. The Owens family is well known in the area, and Ben's great grandfather has a few pieces of his pottery in the Smithsonian. Ben was in the process of making some pieces to take to the Smithsonian next week where he will do a demonstration.

We then traveled across the street and had lunch at a family restaurant. Catfish was the special of the day, and it was very tasty!

Friday night we had the pleasure of eating at Anna & Jerry Weston's home. Dinner, which was catered by a Moravian caterer, included chicken pie, green beans, slaw, and rolls. Anna's

home was beautiful. Unfortunately, it was raining, and we could not stroll through her gardens, but I saw a bird that I had never seen before. He was called a Rufous-Sided Towhee. The next day Pat and I actually heard one outside. When they sing, they say *drink your teeeeeeeeeee*. I'm hoping they will migrate north so we can have the joy of watching and listening to them.

Saturday morning we arrived at the church for the meeting. They had Moravian Sugar Cake for breakfast snack along with coffee and tea. The speaker, Dr. Daniel Crews, spoke on North Carolina's Moravians and Plants. He was quite interesting and had a great sense of humor. One of the NC Unit members is a storyteller, and she told us a few folk stories.

It was nice to mingle with the herby members during our lunch. North Carolina barbecue is the best. After lunch the auction was held with the proceeds going to the National Herb Garden Intern fund. Our Unit's bird bath was a big hit again this year and brought in the bid of \$100. The meeting adjourned around 1:30.

Pat and I still had the whole afternoon, so we shopped around, ate dinner, and went back to the hotel.

Sunday we awoke, and with the top down drove home. Other than Friday evening, the weather was absolutely gorgeous. We had a great time.

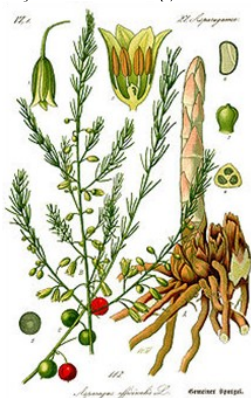
Perhaps you thought there would be a picture of a Rufous-Sided Towhee as part of this picture inset. Sorry, no. But you can see up close and in action a Rufous-Sided Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) that was captured on the Seattle Bird Cam at:

<http://www.seanet.com/~billr/birds/rstowhee.html>

Copy, and paste this link in your browser for a view of this delightful bird.

FAMILY STORIES FROM A FARM GIRL ASPARAGUS AT THE FARM

By Annette Steger



German botanical illustration of asparagus

Spring arrives a few weeks later in the Poconos than in Southern York County and Northern Maryland, which means when growing up we really looked forward to the arrival of spring. One of the treats we had was home grown asparagus. As far back as I can remember our farm had an asparagus bed. What a great vegetable to invest in. After the bed is established it just sends forth the new shoots the following year. In June or early July you can stop cutting the shoots and let the ferns grow to store energy for the next year. Cutting a few of the ferns to use with a freshly cut bouquet of flowers is a bonus.

Mom added fresh asparagus to creamed chipped beef on toast. (See Great Eats on page 5 for the creamed chipped beef recipe I use and how I serve the asparagus with it.) I was not really crazy about the asparagus as a child, but I love it now. When asparagus season "is in", there is a lot of asparagus, especially during a rainy spring. I have collected many recipes in recent years that use asparagus. See the Great Eats for the Asparagus and Crabmeat Salad that uses three fresh herbs including, you guessed it--DILL.



White asparagus at the back, green asparagus in the middle, wild asparagus at the front.

UPDATE FOR NEW FREEDOM YARD SALE



By Pat Herbert

We will have our herb sale table at the New Freedom Spring Yard Sale in the New Freedom Community Park on Saturday, May 15th. Set up time is 7:30 a.m. We are each responsible for 12 plants, which may be dug up from our gardens and labeled with their common names, Latin names, and preferred growing conditions. Or, we may purchase our plants and donate them for our sales selections.

LIONS YARD SALE

Treasures- Rare Finds- Fun Stuff!

SATURDAY MAY 15, 2010

8:00 am to 2:30 pm

NEW FREEDOM PLAYGROUND

GREAT ONLINE READ-A YEAR OF SLOW COOKING

By Diane L.M. Wittig

Have an indentured servant? Short of time? Want a tasty meal preparing while you are other focused? Then visit the website, <http://crockpot365.blogspot.com>, A Year of Slow Cooking where you can learn how to efficiently use your slow cooker for all types of food preparation.

Stephanie O'Dea decided that using her slow cooker daily would be her New Year's Resolution for 2008. She began a daily blog, sharing her experiences and recipes, at the outset and has continued her blog for the past two years, although no longer writing daily.

Now, knowing that *Wild Thymes* is an herbie type newsletter, you knew there would have to be an herbie connection to this website, and you are correct. At this site, there are many recipes that use herbs. Among other recipes, you can find Herb Roasted Chicken, Lemon and Herb Crock-Pot Chicken, Crock-pot Rotisserie Chicken, Southwestern Salsa, and Chicken Parmesan. All the recipes are found in the alphabetical index or category label listing. And if you are looking to avoid gluten, there are 419 gluten free recipes at this website.

For each recipe, in addition to providing an introductory commentary, list and picture of ingredients, and directions in first person, Stephanie includes "The Verdict" so you know how well the recipe was received. Thus, you have the chance to forego a recipe that sounds good in theory, but is not good in practice. In addition to her blog, Stephanie has written the cookbook, *Make It Fast, Cook It Slow*. I haven't looked through this book, but based on the blog recipes, I expect that this volume will be worth the investment.

GREAT ASPARAGUS EATS -- FROM ANNETTE STEGER

CREAMED CHIPPED BEEF ON TOAST

INGREDIENTS

9	T.	Butter	6	c.	milk
9	T.	Minced fresh onions	9-12	oz	chipped beef pulled apart into small pieces
3	T.	Green pepper (optional)	6	T.	dry sherry
9-10	T.	Flour			1 inch pieces of fresh asparagus

DIRECTIONS

1. **Sauté** the onions (and green pepper) in butter until they are golden.
2. **Sprinkle** golden onions (and green pepper) with flour until the mixture is a paste.
3. **Add** the milk slowly, while **stirring** constantly:
4. **Add** the beef, and **simmer** these ingredients until they thicken.
5. **Remove** pan from the heat, and **season** with 6 T. dry sherry.
6. **Heat** fresh asparagus chopped in 1 inch pieces in microwave about 3 minutes.
7. **Serve** on hot buttered toast, topped with the asparagus*

ASPARAGUS AND CRAB MEAT SALAD

INGREDIENTS:

1	c.	Fresh asparagus (cut into 1 inch pieces)	1	T.	onion (chopped fine)
1 ½	c.	crabmeat (cooked, flaked & chilled)	2	t.	prepared mustard
½	c.	celery (sliced)	1	t.	snipped parsley
8-12		Romaine lettuce leaves or 6 c. torn mixed greens	1	t.	snipped chives
½	c.	olive oil	1	t.	snipped fresh dill
¼	c.	lemon juice	½	t.	ground pepper
¼	c.	Red wine vinegar	4		lemon wedges
			¼	t.	salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Cover** asparagus with cold water; **bring** to boil and **boil** for 1 minute.
2. **Remove** from heat; **drain** and **plunge** in ice water.
3. In bowl **combine** asparagus, crabmeat, and celery.
4. **Line** 4 salad plates with greens.
5. **Divide** asparagus mixture among plates.
6. **Prepare** dressing in a jar or shaker with a top.
7. **Combine** herbs and spices, oil vinegar, and onion.
8. **Drizzle** dressing over salads; garnish w/ lemon wedges.

Note: if using canned crabmeat omit the salt from the dressing.

Originally from Anna Sites

GREAT DILL EATS

YOGURT, DILL, AND WALNUT DIP

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 cups Greek yogurt | 1/4 cup chopped dill, plus more for topping |
| 1 clove garlic, chopped | 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt |
| 1/4 cup chopped walnuts, plus more for topping | |

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, **combine** yogurt, garlic, walnuts, dill, and kosher salt.
2. **Top** with additional chopped dill and walnuts.
3. **Serve** with carrots, cherry tomatoes, and blanched green beans

This recipe submitted by Diane L.M. Wittig can be found, with a picture, online at the Real Simple site-
<http://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/yogurt-dill-and-walnut-dip-10000001816469/print-index.html>

CHICKEN POT PIE

INGREDIENTS:

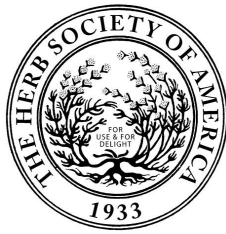
- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 2 tbs unsalted butter | 1/2 tsp salt | 4 cups shredded cooked chicken |
| 1 medium onion, chopped | 1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper | 1 cup frozen peas |
| 4 medium carrots, sliced into
1/4 inch thick coins | 2 tbs all-purpose flour | 1 1/2 tbs chopped fresh dill |
| 2 ribs celery, sliced | 3 tbs heavy cream | 1 (9 inch) store-bought pie crust, such as Pillsbury |
| 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped | 2 cups chicken broth | 1 egg, beaten |

DIRECTIONS:

1. **Preheat** oven to 400 degrees F.
Heat butter in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat.
Add onion, carrots, celery, and garlic and cook until carrots begin to soften, about 6 minutes.
Season with salt and pepper.
2. **Reduce** heat to medium low and stir in flour.
Cook for 1 minute.
Stir in heavy cream and broth, using a whisk, until combined.
Stir in chicken, peas, and dill and bring to a boil.
Remove from heat.
3. Gently **roll out** store-bought pie crust until it reaches 12 inches in diameter.
Place dough atop chicken mixture (still in 12-in cast-iron skillet), and **brush** with egg; **cut** vents in pastry.
Transfer skillet to oven; **bake** until crust is browned and flaky, about 35 minutes.

Yield: 8 servings

This recipe submitted by Shirley Smith was found in "Country Living magazine", March 2010 issue.



WILD THYMES

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

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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

- April 15 Monthly Meeting of Mason-Dixon Unit at 7:00 pm
April 16-17 Pennsylvania Herb Festival
April 30 Paul Smith Library Window Dressing Display
April 30 Mason-Dixon Library Window Dressing Display
May 15 New Freedom Yard Sale
May 22 Mason-Dixon Unit Herb Sale at O'Shea Lumber
May 22 Paul Smith Library Plant Exchange
May 27-30 HSA Educational Conference and Annual Meeting
June 21-22 28th Annual Herbal Delight Symposium
Oct. 15-16 Fall 2010 Symposium

MEMBERSHIP CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MASON-DIXON UNIT

- Patti A. Stinchcomb Guevara
Pat Herbert (Treasurer)
Kim Hollens
Candy Riddle (Historian)
Shirley Smith (Secretary)
Gerrie Snow (Hospitality)
Annette Steger (Liaison to HSA)
Pat Sweetman (Chairman)
Diane L.M. Wittig (Newsletter Editor)

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