



Herbal Seasons

promoting the ethical and environmentally sound propagation, cultivation, harvest and use of herbs in West Virginia.

WVHA Newsletter ~ Winter 2016

OVER THE GARDEN GATE

Fellow Herb Lovers,

Fall is here, again, we've had another successful year and a very well attended Fall Conference with some of our most knowledgeable presenters, not to mention our keynote speakers Joe and Terry Graedon who were enjoyed by all.

Our next conference will be a commemoration of our 25th year as The West Virginia Herb Association, and the Board Members have discussed getting small grants to help fund a bigger and better event. If you know of grants that are available, please contact a Board Member.

I've really had a wonderful time over the past two years learning the ins and outs of our great organization, working with our past presidents and board members to keep everything running smoothly, and trying to prepare a more comfortable transition for our Presidents in the future.

I'd like to give a special thanks to those Board Members, who managed to consistently show up for almost all meetings and were always ready to lend a helping hand, either with physical effort or much needed advice, our Past Presidents who steadfastly stood by to help in any way they could think of, and WVHA Members who went out of their way to pitch in with fund raising, errand running and endless ideas to make our organization better:

Melissa Dennison, Ann Nye and Dave Hawkins for donations of time, wisdom and items to attendee and presenter bags. Dr. Ed Boer for his donation of \$1,500. covering more than half of the Honorarium for Joe and Terry Graedon and his endless support. Kara Vaneck, our Vice President, for tireless work on our new Website, many meetings late into the night to make copies, agendas and forms plus donations for the presenter bags. Lynn Lassiter for putting out a great Newsletter even when the input is low. Myra Bonhage-Hale for her valiant and constant efforts as our Publicity Coordinator. Donna Vavrek, our Secretary, for keeping the Board members on track and keeping records in order. Our Treasurers Megan Gall and Heather Gravert for setting up a new treasurers format and putting up with my short commings in communication. Board members, Theresa Gain, Kathy Flewelling, Laura Yokochi, Jane Birdsong and Susan Young for their constant help. Ann Nye for taking on the sales of T-shirts, cookbooks and all else WVHA at every event she attends. Judy Roylance and Chuck Howell for the Plant Silent Auction (profit \$96.00). Kristen Douglass and Sherri Snyder making our Raffle a great success (profit \$507.00). Deonna Crowe for T-shirt orders. James McCormick for Veterans information and coordination. Mark and Deanna English, Anne Romance, Marion Harless and Joan Beard for constant support.

A very special thank you to Tom and Nicole Jones for they efforts to bring some new life and interesting ideas to the WVHA and an added T-shirt design. Best of Luck on your new Presidency, Tom.

The WV Botanic Garden will be contacting us shortly to set a date to start work on the Herb Garden, which should happen sometime in November. This will be a basic set up for the garden and the plantings should be set for some time in the Spring.

We have a new order of T-shirts with our formal design in colors of light lavender and light Pistachio that will be available after November 20th, contact Ann Nye or Kara Vaneck for orders.

If you have information or submissions for the Newsletter please send them to Lynn Lassiter to keep our Newsletter up-to-date and interesting.

It's been a sincere pleasure being your President for the past two years and if you have concerns or questions that I can help you with, please feel free to contact me.

With Sincere Thanks and fond regards,

Herbally Yours,

Eve Von Deck President

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Announcements

Election Results:

- Tom Jones – President
- Jane Birdsong, Secretary
- Carol McCarthy, Member at Large
- Deonna Crowe, Member at Large

Term of office, for the newly elected officers, is January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018.

Nicole Jones has committed to taking the media coordinator position. Many thanks to Myra Bonhage-Hale for the many years that she devoted to the position.

Membership Kits: Tom Jones has suggested that we start providing new members with a Welcome Kit with items such as salves, soaps, herbal crafts, etc. If anyone has any of these items that they would like to donate to the board for these kits, please let Tom or one of the board members know.

Mullein as Medicine by Chappell

It's mid-autumn. Leaves are falling in clusters of color as the days go faster, and the night grows longer. The sap runs in rivulets from the bark of the old white pine. We've collected fallen pine cones which are heavily encrusted with this fragrant medicine this year. The last of the nuts have fallen and the last of the poke berries have been gathered to dry, and now the rose hip and hawthorn berries are ripe for gathering. Everywhere around us is the abundance of autumn.

After the first frosts of the season, when our green friends have gathered their vitality back into to their subterranean roots to sustain them through the cold of winter, it is time to begin digging and making root medicine: saffras, echinacea, valerian, burdock, mullein and many, many more. but before gathering, remember: take only what you need and leave some for the animals and some to regenerate in their environs.

This year I have made my grandmother's mullein leaf & flower cough syrup and am ticking away the days before I can go up into the hills to gather the roots beneath the first-year mullein rosettes hugging the ground. It is said that the best leaves are those of the first-year rosettes, and they are frost hardy, so you still have time to gather some to dry for tea or to tincture!

Mullein is an old world plant with an ancient medicinal history and has been naturalized around the world. It really is an amazing plant with uses too vast to go into here, so I will focus on those medicinal uses which have served me well. It is a traditional lung medicine, the leaves (which resemble the lung in shape) have been gathered and dried to be smoked by asthmatics for generations. While smoking is frowned upon in general these days, this delivers the medicine directly to the capillaries of the lungs, opening constricted pathways. I believe the old Aristotelean dictum "moderation in all things" applies here and can attest that mullein has relieved the wheeze in my lungs after smoking it for lung medicine.

While most folks know of the traditional use of mullein's leaves as a lung medicine, and know of its flowers steeped in oil to cure earaches, few people are aware of the value of the mullein's first-year root as a medicine for back pain caused by misalignment. I was made aware of this lesser-known medicinal value of mullein to help realign backs by Jim McDonald, an herbalist out of Michigan. As Jim puts it, to see mullein's potential to align backs, one need only consider how the first-year rosettes of this biennial push forth a straight central stalk in its second year. All of this potential lies waiting in the roots of the first-year rosettes. This staff-like stalk of the second-year plant generally reaches a height of five to six feet tall, but we have many that grow over ten feet tall here on the farm. The central stalk has opposite leaves growing up its entirety and is crowned with a spike that yields bright yellow flowers in the summer months.

First-year mullein root puts the spine into alignment. Within a week of taking my tincture in a small amount of water, I found relief, my stiff spine loosening and my lower spine realigning --which brought great relief to my back which had stiffened to the point of feeling like it was nailed to 2" x 4" across my lower spine. Back in the early 1600's, Culpepper said mullein helps stiff sinews to loosen up, and both Matthew Wood (out of Minnesota) and Jim McDonald testify to mullein's ability to help restore synovial fluids -- which lubricates joints. Jim McDonald, employs the root tincture, and I believe Matthew Wood uses poultices of the first-year leaves for this same purpose. Neither herbalist is certain of the mechanism behind this remedy, but they are as certain as I am from employing it in their practice and for their own personal healing. I take my tincture once a day, as part of my health regimen (supplementing with more on days that are especially painful) along with one dried pokeberry (as Dot Montgillion advised) and have found both to be invaluable in relieving the aches and pains which have come to plague me in West Virginia's humid environment.

If you have a stand of mullein which you know to be free of chemical sprays, it's not too late for gathering leaves from the first-year rosettes (which are the best quality leaves to get), before the energy is expended on the stalk and flowers next year. And while it's too late for flowers this year, be on the lookout next summer for their yellow blooms and gather them daily as they come into their short-lived bloom.

Since it's fall, and fall is the time for root medicine, I invite you to create your own mullein root tincture. Wait at least 3-4 days after a good rain, and search out two or three large first year rosettes to dig. Before digging thank the mullein for growing and tell it what use you are going to put it to. Sing a song of thanks as you dig and be kind to this generous being for providing you with much needed medicine. Mullein has a tap root which is relatively easy to dislodge, but be prepared to dig! Shake off any loose dirt and place the root in your gathering bag.

Once home, lightly wash your roots in water with a soft brush. Do not scrub. Shake as much excess water off as you can and then pat dry. Chop your roots into small pieces and place in a quart jar to half full. Cover with 90 proof alcohol (vodka) which is called the menstrum and place the jar in a dark cupboard. Shake about once a day with respect and intention (add your healing energy to the medicine). After about 6 to 8 weeks, the tincture is ready. You can expect the tincture to take on a rich color over the weeks of steeping. It can sit in the menstrum longer than this (I tincture mine for months) without bad effect. Decant, strain the root pieces (marc) from the menstrum and press with a potato ricer, or wrap in gauze or muslin and squeeze whatever you can from the roots. Strain the liquid with a filter lined sieve (coffee filter, paper towel, gauze, or muslin) to assure all foreign particles are removed. Funnel into a dark bottles that have a squeeze bulb dropper top. Keep out of direct sunlight.

WEATHER STICKS - HOW DO THEY WORK?

Submitted by Myra Simmons

But How Does It Work?

Weather sticks might seem like a bit of woodsy folklore that doesn't stand up to modern meteorological methods, but there is actually quite a lot of science behind them. These sticks bend based on the relative humidity. Higher humidity – which is often a signifier of bad weather – makes them curl downward. When they dry out, they straighten out or curve upwards.

The interesting thing is that there aren't many kinds of wood that can be used this way – you can't simply cut a twig from any old tree and expect it to predict the weather. Most trees have what is known as *reaction wood*. In other words, if a tree is always exposed to winds coming out of the west, that tree will develop stronger wood fibers on its eastern side to help brace it against high winds.

Balsam fir, however, develops its reaction wood a bit differently. Live balsam fir trees develop reaction wood on the undersides of their branches so that in dry weather, the reaction wood fibers shrink to conserve water, thus bending them towards the ground. Then, when rains come along and the fir trees start drawing more water, those same fibers expand and the tree's branches unfurl.

Dried balsam fir sticks retain these properties, but since they're no longer attached to a root system, they rely on the amount of humidity in the air to curl and uncurl. In fact, that's one reason why weather sticks have the bark removed. The wood can soak up more water and dry out more quickly, which makes them bend a lot more than if they were protected by a layer of bark.

Using A Weather Stick

The best weather sticks make weather prediction easy. They'll have a very obvious curve upwards or downwards depending on the humidity. To install one, make sure that the stick is oriented upside-down from the way that it would have grown on the tree. Traditionally, weather sticks point up for good weather and down for bad weather. If you install your weather stick right side up (the way it would have grown naturally), it will still work, but it will point upwards as wet weather approaches instead of downwards.

Who would have thought that you could predict the weather with something as simple as a stick? If you're looking for a simple, no-batteries-required way to forecast the weather at home, weather sticks are the best way to do it!



Weather stick photo, taken on Tuesday afternoon, a sunny and dry day. Weather stick is pointing up.



Weather stick, taken on Wednesday morning, which was rainy and humid, less than 24 hours after the first photo was taken.

PARSLEY (*Petroselinum crispum*) - A Year Round Herb Submitted by Eve Von Deck

The snow begins to fly and the garden goes quiet for the winter but there always seems to be the steadfast row of Parsley, ever ready to keep our Thyroid healthy, add a heavy dose of Vitamin C, some iron, calcium, lutein and beta-carotene not to mention a fresh garnish for a winter meal.

When you compare Parsley to some of our other more flavorful and pungent herbs it tends to be a little more subdued. It never gives you the Pine tinged bite of Rosemary or the fire of Cayenne but is more likely to be described as “Grassy” or “Green”, more of an accompanying herb as apposed to a primary one. Parsley is never the less a valuable addition to any meal by playing the role of a background flavor, an herbal bass note, a harmonizer, extender and a final clean, clear breath freshener for a meal that includes a strong herb like Garlic.

The Vitamin C concentration of this herb is outstanding, delivering an average of 200 milligrams of Vitamin C per 100 grams of herb. Iron for strong blood, Calcium for strong bones, Lutein for sharp sight and Beta-Carotene (provitamin A) as a formidable antioxidant all make this herb a vital part of a healthy diet. Beta-Carotene and Lutein are both antioxidants that slow the development of tumors and cellular aging. Cancer prevention is uppermost in may people’s minds and Parsley contains two compounds, Myristicin and Chlorophyll that show great promise in the inhibition of certain cancers, not to mention Chlorophyll’s tooth whitening powers.

Parsley does have some drawbacks, even though it contains high amounts of Calcium it also contains Oxalates, just like Spinach, which bind to Calcium and prevents it from being absorbed by the body. Apiol is also present in Parsley and this compound may stimulate uterine contractions which may precipitate abortion. Parsley should be avoided or limited to small amounts in Pregnancy.

When growing Parsley remember that there are naturally occurring compounds in the seeds that prevent or the least inhibit the rate of germination so if you want your herb to germinate faster than the standard 3 weeks, try soaking the seed overnight and changing the water several times and you’ll find that the germination time is at least half, if not more than the standard time.

Recipes

Cranberry Crunch Cookies from WVHA's Herbal Breads & Goodies, Vol. 4, p. 30

½ c. soft butter

1 c. sugar

¾ c. packed brown sugar

¼ c. milk

1 egg

2 T. orange juice

1 t. baking powder

½ t. salt

½ T. cardamom

¼ t. soda

2 ½ c. chopped fresh – or frozen – cranberries

1 c. chopped pecans

Frosting:

1/3 c. soft butter

2 c. powdered sugar

1 ½ t. almond extract

2-4 T. hot water

Cream together ½ c. butter and brown and granulated sugar. Add milk, egg and orange juice. Mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder, salt, spice and soda. Add to creamed mixture and beat well. Stir in cranberries and nuts. Drop by tablespoonfuls on oiled baking sheet 2" apart. Bake at 350° F for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire racks. For frosting, heat the remaining 1/3 c. butter over low heat till golden brown (about 5 minutes). Cool for 2 minutes. Put in small bowl. Add powdered sugar and almond extract. Beat in water, 1 T. at a time until the frosting is the right consistency to frost cookies. Yields 5-6 dozen.

Golden Milk Recipe send in by Tom Jones from mentalscoop.com

The first antibiotics were prescribed in the late 1930s. 80 years later, many people agree that the growing threat of antibiotic resistant organisms is truly a global issue. How did this happen? Bacteria, viruses and parasites have all been over-treated with antibiotics since the remedy first became common. As early as four years after penicillin was introduced onto the market, resistant infections were being reported. This is because infectious agents are continually evolving to overpower the strain that the antibiotic is made to treat.

Luckily, there is a solution. Turmeric has been used for many years by many different cultures to promote natural healing. Add that with the power of honey, and you have created what is known as the strongest natural antibiotic. This concoction, mixed with a few other ingredients, can be used for seasonal allergy issues, pathogenic infections, strengthening immunity and preventing carcinogenic diseases. The mixture also improves digestion by promoting the activity of beneficial flora in the gut.

Ingredients:

100 grams of [natural honey](#) (converts to 21 teaspoons or 3.5 ounces)

2 tablespoons of natural [apple cider vinegar](#)

1 teaspoon of grated lemon rind (or juice)

1 tablespoon of [turmeric](#) (or curcuma)

A pinch of [black pepper](#) (optional, helps with absorption)

Directions:

1. Add honey, vinegar and lemon rind to bowl. Mix well.
2. Gently stir turmeric and pepper into mixture until combined.
3. Mixture will store, covered, in fridge for three days.

If you begin to experience symptoms of illness, such as having congestion in sinuses, lungs or throat or sudden onset of body aches, it is suggested to begin with half a teaspoon of golden mixture each hour for the first two days. Place measurement of mixture in mouth and allow it to melt before swallowing or place into a cup of lukewarm tea. On the third and fourth day, take a half a teaspoon every two hours. Once day five has arrived, a half a teaspoon three times a day is suggested, as long as the symptoms have been continuing to improve. Additionally, one tablespoon of this mixture every day in the mornings can be consumed for anti-carcinogenic effects, immunity strengthening, seasonal allergies, and general health.

Cautions: Turmeric can cause contraction of the gall bladder muscles and should be avoided by people who suffer from gall bladder issues. It also lowers blood pressure and blood sugar levels. This is generally seen as a positive effect, but if you already have low blood pressure or you have issues with your blood sugar levels, consult your doctor first.

Disclaimer: The strategies, techniques and suggestions expressed here are intended to be used for educational purposes only. The author and the associated website are not rendering medical advice, nor to diagnosing, prescribing, or treating any injury, condition, illness or disease. It is imperative that before beginning any regimen, you receive full medical clearance from a licensed physician. We claim no responsibility to any person or entity for any liability, loss, or damage caused, or alleged to be caused, directly or indirectly as a result of the use, application, or interpretation of the material presented here.

Tieraona's Fever Tea submitted by Tom Jones

1 tsp chamomile flowers

1 tsp elder flowers

1 tsp lemon balm

1 tsp maple syrup or honey

2 cups water

Pour 2 cups of near boiling water over the herbs and let steep for 5 min. Strain. You can add 1 tsp of maple syrup for a child under the age of 12 months or honey for anyone older.

How to use; For children 6-12 months give 1-2 tsp every hour or two. Older children and adults should drink freely

Tieraona Low Dog, MD

Garlic Feta Cheese Dip from the kitchen of Donna L. Vavrek

Makes 1½ cups

4 ounces crumbled feta cheese

4 ounces cream cheese

1/3 cup mayonnaise

1 garlic clove, minced

¼ teaspoon dried basil

¼ teaspoon dried oregano

1/8 teaspoon dill weed

1/8 teaspoon dried thyme

In a mixing bowl, combine the above ingredients with mixer until blended well. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Serve with vegetables or crackers.

SOURDOUGH STARTER - from Linda Drachman & Peter Wynne in "Great Grains" - Submitted by Eve Von Deck

If your looking for the recipe for the Amish Sourdough Starter that gets passes around from friend to friend for the Holiday's this is it:

MAKES 3 CUPS

3 cups bread flour or mixed flour

1 tablespoon sugar

1 envelope active dry yeast

2 cups spring water (105 to 115 degrees)

1. In a large jar or bowl that has been slightly warmed, combine the flour, sugar and yeast. Gradually add the warm water and mix until smooth.
2. Cover the container loosely and let it stand for 2 days before using. Refrigerate for longer storage (up to 12 days).
3. Use as needed according to individual recipes. Replenish the starter by replacing the amount used with equal amounts of flour and warm water. For example, if 2 cups of the starter are used, replace it with 1 cup of flour and 1 cup of water. Recover the jar and refrigerate for future use.

NOTE: Many Amish make the starter useful in AMISH FRIENDSHIP BREAD which uses a cup of ripe or sweetened canned fruit to FEED the starter every 3 days, adding 1 cup of flour each time also allows you to share a cup of the starter with a friend so that you can share it with others.

Warning: This has a mind of it's own and will grow so that you have way too much and not enough friends to give it to so go back to a few cups just for yourself and don't feed it for awhile, keeping it refrigerated.

Upcoming Events

September 30th-October 1st, 2017: WVHA Fall Conference. Jacksons Mill, Weston. Mark your calendars for next year's conference! More information will be posted as it becomes available.

Please remember that we are always happy to spread the news of coming events to the WVHA membership. Please forward the information to Lynn Lassiter at lynnlassiter50@aol.com .

Websites to Explore

www.WestVirginiaHerbAssociation.org – WVHA's new (and temporary) website. Check it out and bookmark it for all WVHA news and updates.

http://www.naturallivingideas.com/herbs-vegetables-plants-to-grow-in-water/?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=email_this&utm_source=email – check out this site for herbs you can grow indoors in water!