

La Yerba Buena

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

NUMBER 184, JULY 2005

Sharing in the Round

Our July meeting "Sharing in the Round" will tap the knowledge and talents of our members. Bring your favorite herb: book, catalog, pictures, travel brochure, web site, craft, recipe, formula, tip, idea, tool, fresh cut, dried, or potted plants. Suggested topics: herbs for aromatherapy, beauty, bath, spa, beverages, cordials, vinegars, seasoning or tea blends, cooking, crafting, new varieties, gardening, landscaping, history, lore, internal or external wellness or medicine, herb farms, shops, gardens, herbs to attract wildlife, herbs for pest control, or surprise us with your unique herbal topic to share for a minute or two. If you want to pass out recipes or instructions, bring at least 50 – 70 copies, otherwise bring just one extra copy to turn in for the SAHS newsletter to print as space allows. Better yet, email your information for the newsletter to Syeira Budd at syeiraq@yahoo.com. Those who share will be entered in the drawing to be held at the end of the evening. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 14, at the San Antonio Garden Center, corner of Funston and N. New Braunfels. For more information, call the SAHS Hotline at 210-641-8166 and leave a message, an officer will return your call. Or visit our website at www.sanantonioherbs.org.

Refreshments

Members with last names beginning **T - Z** and **A - B** are asked to bring refreshments to the meeting. Please arrive by 6:30 p.m. so all can enjoy your dish. And don't forget to bring your recipe for anything homemade so it can be included in the next newsletter.

New SAHS Officers

Voted into office on May 12, 2005, at the Member's Banquet:

President: Jane McDaniel

Vice-President in charge of Programs: Diane Lewis

Vice-President in charge of Membership and editor of "La Yerba Buena": Syeira Budd

Secretary: Veronica Gard

Treasurer: Karen Cabral

Publicity: Lyn Belisle

Historian: Brian Townsend

Members-at-Large: Adrienne Hacker & Yoli Huron

Welcome New Members!

A big welcome from all of us to the following members who recently joined SAHS:

Craig & Barbara Bertolett

Nick & Leslie Vann, Nematode Nick's

Newsletter Deadline

Don't hesitate to share news, ideas, recipes, remedies, or stories in our monthly newsletter. Email your July newsletter submissions to Syeira Budd at syeiraq@yahoo.com by Sunday, July 24.

July Board Meeting

This month's board meeting will be held on July 21 at 7:00 p.m. at Karen Cabral's home. If you would like to add anything to the July agenda, please contact Jane McDaniel in advance at janesirish@earthlink.net or 930-1026.

Membership News

All sorts of membership materials are available to you. Please contact Syeira Budd at the monthly meetings to pick up your 2005 membership discount card (good for a 10% discount at selected local nurseries), current membership contact lists (\$1.00 each), or new member welcome packets.

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Upcoming SAHS Programs

August 11th:

Cooking demonstration by Azuca chef, Rene' Fernandez

September 8th:

Native American Herbs by Gaye Sekula, from Austin

October 13th:

Members only "Not for Profit" information, discussion, and vote

November 10th:

SAHS Member's Market, with herbal culinary & craft demonstrations (open to the public for shopping & learning, with no admission charge)

December 8th:

SAHS Member's only Christmas Banquet

Upcoming Community Events

August 20th:

Habitat for Humanity project (need volunteers & tools) contact Cynthia Hodas at 210-824-6064

October 15th, 9am-5pm:

San Antonio Herb Market at Aggie Park, 6205 West Ave. at Loop 410, www.sanantonioherbmarket.org or call 210-688-9421 for information. We will have a booth; pass out information and samples of recipes from our cookbook; sell memberships, books, etc; and display "herbs in everyday products". We will also man two tables where we pass out programs for the event. We are dividing the time into 4, two-hour shifts. We will need a minimum of six volunteers per shift. We also need people who will make samples of recipes from our cookbook; they sell like "hotcakes" when we have samples. This is always a fun event and a great way to help our organization by giving two hours of your time. Chairperson: Diane Lewis at 210-495-6116.

October 22nd:

Founder's Day at San Pedro Park (SAHS will have a booth). We need a chairperson for our booth. This is another fun event to meet potential new members. Contact Diane Lewis at 210-495-6116 for info or to volunteer.

November 5th:

Habitat for Humanity project (need volunteers & tools) contact Cynthia Hodas at 210-824-6064.

Habitat for Humanity Update

Thumbs up to Cynthia Hodas for her informative update on opportunities for SAHS members to provide their herb and plant knowledge for upcoming house plantings. Did you know that Habitat has already built over 400 homes in San Antonio? We still need two volunteers to supervise the last 2 plantings at the Van De Walle site on August 20th. The Van De Walle site (located off old highway 90 near 410) will then be complete and we will be able to concentrate on the new development near Palo Alto College this coming November. If you are free on August 20th, please contact Cynthia Hodas at 210-824-6064.

Garden tool donations are still being accepted. Bring them to the July or August meeting.

PAC Herb Class

Palo Alto College Continuing Education & Customized Training presents:

"Growing Herbs, the Beneficial and Useful Plants"
HALT 1092

Course Description: Introductory course on herbs to grow in South Central Texas, when and how to plant and maintain them. Instruction includes history; design principles; harvesting and storage techniques; and some traditional and creative uses for the harvest.

Instructor: Diane Lewis

Mosquito Bite Relief

(from www.fredericksburgherbfarm.com)

3 tablespoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
6 tablespoons water

In a small mixing bowl, combine all ingredients together by stirring until a paste forms. Apply paste to the areas that mosquitoes have bitten and let sit for 15 to 20 minutes. Rinse with warm water and pat dry.

Use this remedy to soothe areas swollen and irritated by mosquito bites.

June Meeting Recipes

Special thanks to those of you who provided a printed recipe for your dish.

Whole Wheat Fig Bread

(Linda Melenzyer)

6 cups whole wheat flour
 2 cups unbleached white flour
 1 cup milk
 1/2 cup honey
 1/4 cup brown sugar
 2 cups water
 3 tablespoons yeast, or three packages + a pinch of sugar to activate
 1 teaspoon sea salt
 1 teaspoon almond extract
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 1 cup chopped dried figs

Heat milk to a boil and remove from heat, add honey, brown sugar, salt, almond extract, vanilla, and figs. Cool to touch. Stir until mixed.

Mix water, yeast + the pinch of sugar, water needs to be warm, but not hot. Let stand for 10 minutes, then add it with the cooled milk mixture. Put in mixer, turn on mixer and gradually add the flour, both whole wheat and white. Mix until thoroughly mixed. Let rise in a warm location until double in bulk. Punch down and separate into equal amounts. Place in bread pans that have been oiled, let rise again, then cook for 45 minutes in 350 degree oven.

Makes 3 loaves

Gorgonzola & Walnut Terrine

(Sandra Peters, from Central Market Cooking School)

1 cup walnuts, toasted
 3/4 pound Gorgonzola, softened
 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
 1/2 pound goat cheese, softened
 1/2 cup chives, minced
 Salt & pepper
 Toasted baguette slices, crackers, carrots, radishes, or celery for serving

In a food processor, combine the Gorgonzola and 5 oz. of the cream cheese. Puree until smooth.

In a separate bowl, blend the goat cheese with the

remaining cream cheese and 3 tablespoons of the chives. Season with salt and pepper.

In a terrine or loaf mold lined with plastic wrap, sprinkle 1/3 of the walnuts on the bottom. Spread half of the Gorgonzola mixture. Sprinkle another 1/3 of the walnuts and 3 tablespoons of the chives. Spread the goat cheese on next. Top with the remaining walnuts and chives. Top with the remaining Gorgonzola mixture. Cover with the plastic wrap and press lightly on the mold. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or up to 2 days.

Unmold the terrine, slice it while it is still cold, and then let come to room temperature to serve.

Serves 12

Cheese-Beef Pie

(Lenora McKenzie, adapted from Feb. '85 Southern Living)

1.5 lb. ground beef
 8 oz. can tomato sauce
 2 teaspoons chili powder
 1 egg, beaten
 1/2 cup sour cream
 1/2 cup chopped onion
 4 oz. can chopped green chiles, drained
 3 cloves finely chopped garlic
 1-1/2 cups (6 oz.) sharp cheddar cheese, grated
 10 oz. can biscuits, refrigerated

Brown beef and onion. Drain; stir in tomato sauce, chiles, chili powder, garlic, and salt to taste. reduce heat and cook uncovered for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat.

Combine egg, sour cream, and 1/2 cup of sharp cheddar cheese, mixing well. Add to meat, stirring well. Set aside. Separate each biscuit into two halves making 20 rounds. Press 10 rounds into a greased pie plate (9"). Top with meat mixture. Cover with remaining rounds. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Top with remaining cheese and bake 5 more minutes.

Serves 6-8

July To-Do List

by Brian Townsend

1st Week:

- Container plants sitting in full sun may be taking a beating in the 100-degree heat. If so, move them to a location where they get a few hours (shade from 3:00 on) less sun. Check the root balls of container plants to make sure they are absorbing water. If the root ball has dried out too much, water will just run down the side. If this happens, soak the plant for 10 to 15 minutes to correct the problem. Monthly feeding (go lightly) with fertilizer encourages growth.

- Use netting or Grow-Web to protect succulent fruits such as figs and peaches from birds. It may not keep out squirrels and other mammals.

Recognize chinch bugs in St. Augustine grass by the moth-eaten spots in the hottest part of the yard. If they sweep up when you brush your hand across the grass, treat with acephate or other insecticide labeled for use.

- If tomatoes are infested with spider mites, harvest the remaining fruit and pull up and discard the plants to the compost pile.

- Enjoy firebush, esperanza, poinciana, salvia, crape myrtle and zinnias blooming all over San Antonio!

- Select day lily varieties this month as the plants reach their peak bloom.

- Seeds from many spring-blooming flowers are mature and can be harvested, stored and then planted later this fall in your landscape.

- July is a good month to prune oaks and avoid oak wilt threat. Paint pruning wounds immediately to be safe.

- As spring-planted vegetable plants play out, add them to your compost pile as long as they are not diseased or pest-infested. should not see it.

2nd Week:

- For hot-weather nematode control, plant Mari-Mum marigolds.

- Lawn clippings left on the lawn decompose to provide nutrients and organic material. Do not waste landfill space by bagging clippings.

- Hummingbirds will be bringing their young to sugar-water feeders now. Keep feeders clean, dumping old solution once a week (twice a week if in the sun and the temperatures are in the 90's) into a shallow pan for butterflies.

- Plant crape myrtles while in bloom to ensure

selection of color (also be sure of the variety's mature height).

- As vegetable beds become vacant, till and cover with a black (or clear) plastic cover to control weeds and nematodes until fall planting.

- Fertilize bougainvillea and plumeria to keep them blooming through the summer.

- Conserve water by buying plants adapted to the area.

3rd Week:

- Don't waste water. Water most plants deeply on the day before they would have wilted.

- Plant Asters, Firebush, perennial garden Mums, Salvias, Marigolds (spider mites are less problematic in the fall), etc. for fall bloom in sunny sites.

- Begin preparing vegetable garden for fall planting; tomatoes look for Surefire, Heatwave and Merced.

- Pinch back garden mums for the last time.

- A birdbath or other source of water will help birds, bees and other critters survive a drought condition.

- Remove suckers from the base of fruit trees. They grow from the root system (stock) and are a different variety than the top, called the scion. Suckers will quickly dominate the scion if left uncut.

- Skim the top of lantana and verbena with a string mower every six weeks to keep the plants blooming consistently.

- If you need more summer color in your landscape, use periwinkle, moss rose, firebush, lantana and esperanza in sunny spots. Use firespike, coleus, caladiums or impatiens in the shade.

- Turk's cap and shrimp plant are good blooming plants that attract hummingbirds and grow in light shade.

- Bear with trees and shrubs with yellowing leaves. They are reacting to hot, dry weather and will recover in milder conditions.

- Trim leggy petunias and impatiens to promote new growth and new flowers.

- Spray iron sulfate on plants with chlorotic leaves (yellow leaves with green veins).

- Continue to prune fall-blooming perennials through August.

- There is still time to set out another planting of annuals such as marigolds, zinnias and periwinkles. They will require extra attention for the first few weeks

because of the heat, but the plants should reward you with color from late September until November.

- Establish a new compost pile to accommodate the upcoming fall leaf accumulation.

4th Week:

- If you can find sturdy American hybrid marigold transplants that are not blooming yet, plant now for a spectacular fall display.
- It is time to plant your fall vegetable garden (or start in shelter if the temperature is hovering around 100 deg.). Put in a simple drip irrigation system for efficient watering. Kits are easy to use. A soaker hose is a simple method to install drip irrigation in vegetable gardens and flower beds. But don't turn the faucet on full blast. A quarter turn of the spigot is all you need.
- Galls may be prevalent on oak leaves. The round balls, about the size of BB's, protect eggs of small wasps. They do not harm the trees, and no treatment is necessary.
- A black sooty mold on leaves is evidence of sucking bugs excreting honeydew. Kill those suckers with the least toxic, yet effective insecticide.
- Sandburs can be collected by dragging a carpet remnant over the area where they are growing.
- Firebush, planted in full sun on a patio, will attract hummingbirds. Use fire spike for shaded areas. The driest time of the year is the best time to paint and reseal wooden outdoor furniture, decks and fences.
- Water apple and pear trees weekly.
- Check the moisture level of your compost pile.
- Prune dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning until midwinter to avoid stimulating tender new growth.
- Select and order spring-flowering bulbs so they will arrive in time for planting. Check with the extension service for proper chilling and planting times.
- Plant tomatoes now for your fall garden. Use heat-setting varieties such as Surefire and Sun Master. Now is the time to plant cabbage, eggplant, peppers and squash.

In Our Herb Garden:

- This is a maintenance month: continue to avoid drought stress, to check and replace mulch layers, and to pinch back blossoms.
- Trim back mints to ensure a continuous supply of young, tender leaves. Continue to cut them back

throughout the summer (keep them off the ground!!!).

- Do not try to cure heat stress by spraying haphazardly during the mid-day. DO NOT OVERWATER.
- Enjoy harvesting dill, cilantro, basil and other annuals that go to seed in the heat. Feed basil after harvesting.
- Note on saving seed: ideal storage conditions are 45 Deg. (F) and humidity below 50%. Store freshly harvested seeds in brown paper bags until thoroughly dry. Try not to store for more than 1 year. Parsley seeds especially should be fresh each sowing season.
- Till, compost and prepare fall garden area.

Thanks to Brian Townsend for this monthly article. Brian has culled this information from the wisdom of a number of local and regional gardening experts, plus our own *HERBS: A Resource Guide for San Antonio*.

Garden Pests Be Gone!

(from www.fredericksburgherbfarm.com)

Homemade products can be used to keep unwanted pests at bay. They are inexpensive and safe if used properly.

Hot Pepper Spray

- 1 cup cayenne peppers
- 1 cup water
- 3 tablespoons liquid soap

Puree peppers, mix well with water and liquid soap. Strain mixture through filter such as cheesecloth and store in a glass container until ready to use. Dilute at a rate of one part mixture to 30 parts of water. Spray mixture directly on all leaf surfaces of infested plants.

Garlic Spray Soap

- 18 pureed garlic cloves
- 5 teaspoons mineral oil
- 1 quart water
- 8 tablespoons liquid dish soap

Soak garlic in mineral oil for 24 hours. Add water and soap, stirring well. Strain through cheesecloth or other filter to remove particles. Store this concentrate in a glass jar until ready to use. Dilute at a rate of 30 parts of water to one part of mixture.

July 2005

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1	2	3
4 <i>Independence Day</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 SAHS Meeting	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 SAHS Board Meeting	22	23	24 Newsletter Deadline
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2005

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 SAHS Meeting	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 SAHS Board Meeting	19	20 Habitat for Humanity Workday	21 Newsletter Deadline
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Summer Recipes

(from www.fredericksburgherbfarm.com)

Basil Tomato Pie

We love this recipe — it helps slow the avalanche of fresh tomatoes we experience each summer.

2 cups flour
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 2 teaspoons baking powder
 1/2 cup unsalted butter
 1/3 cup milk
 3 pounds sliced ripe tomatoes
 2 tablespoons finely chopped chives
 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh sweet basil
 3/4 teaspoon salt
 1/2 cup shredded extra sharp cheddar cheese
 2/3 cup mayonnaise

Combine flour, salt and baking powder in food processor container. Process briefly. Add butter; process until crumbly. Add milk. Process until dough forms. Divide into halves. Roll on floured surface. Fit half the pastry into a 10 inch pie plate sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Mix tomatoes, herbs, salt and 1/2 cup cheese into bowl. Spoon into prepared pie plate. Spread mayonnaise over tomato mixture. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Top with remaining pastry, sealing edge and cutting vents. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 - 60 minutes or until browned and bubbly.

Yields 6 servings.

Chile-Peach Pesto

We love to stuff this under the skin of chicken breasts, or use in a cheese torta with cinnamon basil sprigs.

2 cups fresh cinnamon basil
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1/4 cup minced sun-dried peaches
 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 2 teaspoons freshly minced rosemary
 1/2 teaspoon crushed red chile pepper
 3/4 cup olive oil
 1/4 cup chopped pecans, toasted

In a food processor, grind the basil, garlic, peaches, cheese, rosemary and chile while machine is running, slowly add the oil. Add pecans and pulse briefly.

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Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional.

Business Members

We thank our Business Members for their support. When you patronize their businesses, be sure to mention that you are a member of the SAHS.

**New Business Member*

Jean Dukes, RN, **Ten Days Health Ministry**
102 Firesage, Universal City, TX 78148
(210) 566-4379
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William Vernon Scott, **South Texas Yerbero**
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nematodenick01@cs.com
Use your SAHS membership discount card for a 10% discount!

Greg Perkins, **In Home Senior Care**
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**Check out our new website address and note the updates in progress at:
www.sanantonioherbs.org**

The San Antonio Herb Society
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