



NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

APRIL, 2020

Have you had an opportunity to go out into the garden? Or just to take a walk around the block to admire your neighbor's gardens? The weather right now has been spectacularly good, even if the mood of the world has been very glum. The good news is that bright sunshine kills virus on surfaces, so it is pretty safe to go outside. The extra sunshine supplies vitamin D to our bodies, this promotes growth and repair of cells. A spiritual win and a physical win.

Drake White is our virtual speaker for this month. She is dedicated to the conservation of our pollinators: the insects, birds and other animals that help pollinate all the plants in our gardens. This is a key and vital element is the growth of crops. Her business is called The Nectar Bar. She is a consultant for native landscape design, cultivation and education.

We are hosting her with a virtual presentation on Pollinators, April 9, at 7 p.m. At press time, we have not heard back from her, but are still hopeful that this will take place. Debarah and Robin will be connecting with you on MailChimp with updates.



**San Antonio Herb Society
will meet 'virtually" on
April 9, 2020**

**NOT at The Garden Center
at 3310 N. New Braunfels
from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. But
on line, with a virtual meet-
ing.**

**We will miss having all of you
for pot luck. Looking forward
to the time when we can
meet again for a meal.**

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WE LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES

Members got together for the weekend of Earthwise (see article), but Spring Bloom, our favorite event of the year has been postponed, due to shelter-in-place orders put forth by the city. Mary Dunford assures me that there will be Herbs, as soon as SAWS sees their way clear to assembling Spring Bloom... or maybe Late Summer Bloom... or maybe even Fall Bloom. Things being a little uncertain just now.

In the meantime, garden shops are still open. They are all keeping safe distances, and we are all keeping hands clean. Available still: herbs, roses in huge abundance at Fanick's nursery, trees, seeds and spring plants, peat moss, perlite, fertilizer, etc., etc. The Herb Society still has a box of seeds, if anyone is home and has some time to plant a few. I double seeded the Kentucky Wonder beans, expecting only half to be fertile. Much to my surprise, they ALL came up. The Ferrari beans were slower to emerge but look as though they are about 80% viable. These do not need a whole big garden, put a few in a pot and see what develops. Dill could go in now, and of course Basil, our herb of the month, is the big herb to grow right now.

Herb Society Board

President

Robin Maymar

robinmaymar@gmail.com

1st Vice-President (Programs)

Position vacant

Treasurer Debarah Wilson

debarah_wilson@bellsouth.net

Secretary Position vacant

Membership Milan Maymar, protem

Publicity Vicki Jamvold

Member at Large

Jane McDaniel janesirish@att.net

Our website: <https://sanantonioherbs.org>



Aha! We wondered where all those extra cars were coming from in the Central Market parking lot.

EARTHWISE SALE A SUCCESS

Report on our Earthwise Event: We seem to have arrived late. Scheduled to begin at 9:30, the hall was full of customers as we walked in the door before 9. Luckily, we had everything set up, so uncovered the table and began selling.

Our sales were not spectacular. We talked to lots of people; handed out lots and lots of flyers advertising our Paella event set for March 12. While Annette and Gloria were busy talking to passers-by, Robin walked around the hall talking to the other exhibitors. They did not have as many people at their booth as we did; I do not think we had more than a three-minute lull the whole time.

There were a wide variety of vendors: Via bus, fire department, Census Bureau, Tea, Compost, Books turned into incredible scrap book themes, bags and sewing, hand crafted items of many varieties. There were plant sales and tree give-aways, food trucks, presentation from school bands and a whole separate venue for children's activities. We had a grand time and are looking forward to next year.

We will definitely put this event on next year's calendar and remind you all to come, either to visit and help sell, or just to walk around to see all the interesting things to buy and sample.

Annette and Gloria hard at work.



The crowd stayed this busy the whole time we were there. Lots of fun talking and giving samples.



Herb of the Month: Basil

While there are over forty species of basil in cultivation, sweet basil, or *Ocimum Basilicum*, remains the favorite of most cooks. Brushing up against basil leaves releases a scent that takes us back to the gardens of childhood.

Basils are easily cultivated from seed. Sow this month, when frost is past and cool nights are gone. You can set out small plants, too. Pinch the tops back (to put in the salad) so the plants will form compact little bushes from which leaves can be taken all summer long. Harvesting leaves stimulates the plant to put out more leaves. When basils begin to flower, pinch these back also. The flowers make a colorful addition to salads. Basils usually keep producing up until the first frost.

At this time of year, we usually scour the freezer for any pesto made last fall at first frost. It freezes well, and can be enjoyed on cold winter evenings. Nothing brings back the heat of summer better than pesto on hot pasta, with parmesan cheese. If there is any left, use it now, as you will soon have the fresh variety in abundance..

Sources tell us that you can bring new plants in, late in the fall, to keep going all winter.

Basil grows 10 to 18 inches tall, likes a sunny location, and rich soil. When we moved to a new location, we used pots of basil to determine the best location to plant. Each pot was put in a separate place. The place that the basil grew the best was where we located our bed. One source suggest that you not fertilize basil as “flavor is likely to be sacrificed for lush growth.

Basil has a very distinctive set of leaves. This makes it easy if tiny weed varieties spring up .Nothing beats the flavor of basil. So we will close with a recipe for basil oil.

1 to 1½ cups fresh basil leaves*

1-2 quarts boiling water

¾ cup neutral flavored oil, such as canola or sunflower oil

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

Place basil leaves in a strainer over a large bowl.

Slowly pour boiling water over the fresh herbs.

Immediate rinse with lots of cold water (this stops the cooking process), then allow to drain.

Roll the herbs on several thickness of paper towels

and squeeze dry, then squeeze again, to remove as much water as possible.

Put blanched herbs in a blender or the bowl of a food processor. Add the oils and blend well for about a minute.

Pour pureed herb and oil mixture into a small sauce pan on medium heat. Slowly bring the herb oil to a simmer and then cook for about a minute longer, stirring gently, until you see the mixture transform to a bright green color. You'll notice the color change first at the edges and then it will spread to the center.

Don't let the oil cook at too high a heat, it could burn or fry the basil. Turn down if bubbling too rapidly. Use with salad dressing, add as brilliant garnish, even as a muscle rub. Store in refrigerator. Lasts about two weeks, so use it up.

* There is approximately ¾-1 cup of basil leaves in a typical grocery store plastic container. The more basil you use, the more intensely basil-y the oil will taste.



Meeting Minutes

GENERAL MEETING AGENDA March 12, 2020

Meeting called to order a 7:05 pm by President Robin Maymar She thanked everyone for coming, in spite of the world circumstances of a Covid 19 threat

New members Bill V. from Fredericksburg, was welcomed. Loretta V. C was welcomed as a renewing member.

There were an exceptional number of guests: amie, Martha, Margaret, Abby, Marilyn, Kristin, Cheryl, Donna, and Carmen.

Special thanks went to Cyndy Moore, Sandra Woodall for setting our table theme St. Patrick's Day , and all of the members for preparing such lovely food. Recipes were left on the table, so they will be in the April Yerba Buena

There is a copy of the treasurer's report available. At the board meeting a budget was presented and approved. If anyone want to see that, please see Debarah Wilson

Minutes from the last General meeting were in the newsletter. There were no additions or corrections so they were accepted as written.

The president initiated a conversation about the upcoming meetings, because the people of San Antonio have been asked to shelter in place and not meet in groups. Aubrey suggested that the next meeting could be live streamed, or put on FaceBook so members could participate. A show of hands indicated that about half the audience could access this. We will be playing this by ear as events develop.

SAWS SPRING BLOOM has been cancelled due to the circumstances.

EarthWise was a well attended event. We netted \$180, which was not that much, however, we met a lot of people, and many of them are attending today.

Weed and Gloat will still meet March 30. Members who are interested in helping, contact Robin.

A committee to choose officers is still needed. There were no volunteers. Vicki had been tasked with bringing a sign-up clip board but did not attend.

An Ollas Workshop had originally been scheduled with sign-up at Spring Bloom. It will be postponed until circumstances warrant.

Members were reminded that there were French thyme plants for sale in the back. Information about French thyme appears in the Yerba Buena for March

Also, on the side table in the back was the Herb Society, prize winning display of the Twelve Herbs to grow in South Texas. Members were encouraged to visit the display. We want everyone to be aware of other activities that occur in the Garden Center, and that we, as members, are invited to attend any and all of them. The Flower Show is of especial interest to many members, so new members should take advantage of the invitation

Our guest chef, Carmen Romo de Vivar, was introduced to tell us about how to prepare Paella. Copies of the recipe were handed out, if you would like an electronic copy it will be available at the website.



SPRING CLEANING/ LOSE WEIGHT

Spring is in the air (well, just around the corner), and so are those unwanted dust bunnies and other allergens in your home. Keep your abode springtime fresh with these decluttering tips from the Soap and Detergent Association:

Allow enough time to get organized. Give yourself 3 to 6 hours per closet or 1 ½ days per room.

Buy each family member a “treasure chest” for memorabilia- a large plastic tub that fits under a bed or in the closet floor. They can add or delete items and let the container size limit how much they keep.

LOSE (PAPER) WEIGHT THIS SPRING

Set aside 10 to 15 minutes each day to sort mail and take action on necessary items.

Remove and file special magazine and newspaper articles.

Sort mail over a trash can or recycle bin, eliminate as much as possible.

Reply to unwanted solicitations. We use a form letter on a half sheet of paper to mail back to solicitor:

“Dear Sirs,

I am no longer in a position to contribute to your worthy organization.

Please take me off your mailing list.

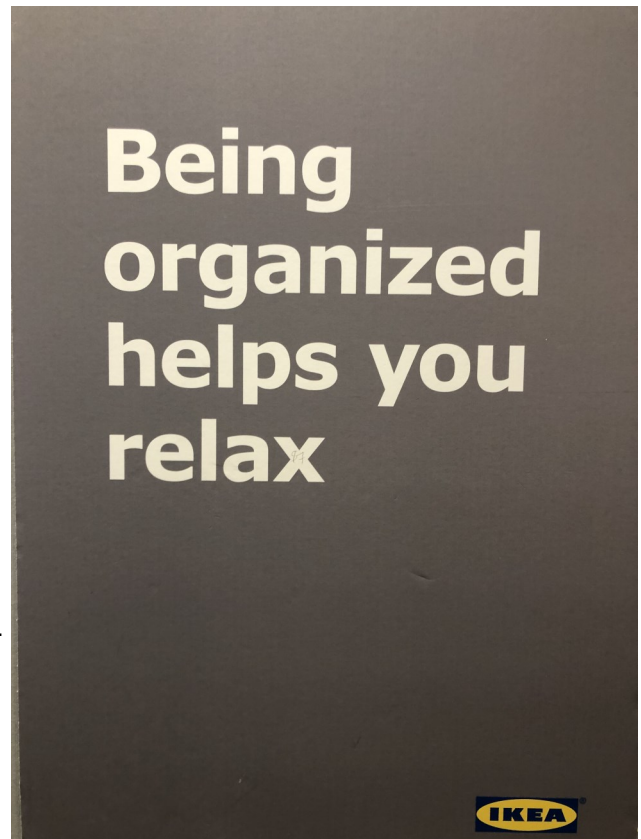
Thank you” (Does not always work, but is worth a shot.)

Recycle books you have read- to friends- to groups you attend- to the Herb Society Free table

Recycle magazines- to doctor’s offices- waiting rooms- HS Free Table- or shred for compost heap.

Toss out old paperwork, such as expired coupons, old warranties and service contracts, outdated schedules, invalid insurance policies, old grocery receipts, recipes and clippings you haven’t used in the last five years. Toss newspapers older than a week and magazines older than 3 months.

Keep a limited supply of bags, containers and jars. That means 6 to 12 containers and glass jars, about 12 paper bags and 24 plastic bags. Let the rest go.



BALL MOSS does not threaten oak trees, but if the appearance bothers you, control it by treating now with Kacide fungicide (baking soda is also effective). Follow label instructions. Ball moss is a aerophyte, that obtains moisture from the atmosphere, rather than from roots. You can see ball moss growing on the electrical wires above the intersection of Hildebrand Ave. at IH 37. Bird feet or poop has deposited the seeds there.. **Mistletoe**, however does harm trees and should be removed. It is also poisonous.



Culinary SIG : WAFFLES AND DOGS

We decided to cancel our planned Hotdogs and Waffles because of restrictions on people meeting, due to the Corovid 19 virus threat. In lieu of a report, here's a recipe for Grain-Free Waffles

GRAIN-FREE WAFFLES OR PANCAKES WITH FRUIT SAUCE From *Always Hungry* by David Ludwig

There is no sugar added to these waffles, highlighting the sweetness of the fruit topping. Make a batch to eat immediately, or cool and store in a large zip-top plastic bag in the fridge or freezer. Reheat the waffles in the toaster or toaster oven- a breakfast treat for any phase of your diet.

Preparation time 15 minutes Total time 30 minutes. Makes 4 waffles

Ingredients

- 1 cup garbanzo-fava or garbanzo bean flour (Sprouts carries this)
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 egg, separated
- 3/4 cup plain whole-milk Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup unsweetened soy or almond milk or whole milk
- 1/4 cup neutral-tasting oil, high-oleic safflower or avocado oil), plus more for brushing waffle pan
- 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract (no sugar added)

Fruit Sauce

- 3 cups frozen blueberries, strawberries, or cherries
- 1 tablespoon water
- 3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- Optional: whipped cream for topping

Directions: 1. Preheat the waffle iron.

2. Combine flour, salt, and baking soda in a large bowl.
3. In another bowl, whisk together the egg yolk, yogurt, milk, oil and vanilla.
4. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients until well combined.
Batter should be thick like a muffin or cake batter.
5. Beat the egg white with a whisk or immersion blender until it forms soft peaks.
Gently fold the egg white into the batter.

Use Pam or brush oil on the waffle iron. Spoon 1/2 cup of batter per waffle into the waffle iron, Cook about 2 minutes until waffles are golden brown.

Fruit Sauce: Place fruit, water and maple syrup in a small pan. Cover and cook over medium-low heat until soft and warm. Pour the mixture into a wide-mouthed glass mason jar or deep cup. Using an immersion blender, gently puree berries.

Serve each hot waffle with about 1/3 cup fruit topping and 3 tablespoons whipped cream.

WEED AND GLOAT SIG

March 30, 2020 Weed and Gloat, San Antonio Botanical Garden (SABOT)

WEED AND GLOAT was due to convene on Monday March 30. Our plan was to meet at 10 am at the Botanical Gardens. We would go into the back gate, even if the Gardens are closed. We had a call in to the gardeners, asking what the policy is about work in the gardens. Unfortunately, we have not heard back. So we have contacted members by phone. Of course, we'll follow whatever guidelines they have. (They never got back to us) The front gate is closed because of quarantine, but the weeds don't know this.

On walks during the week in our neighborhood, we see lots and lots of gardeners out doing all sorts of work. Saturday Fanick's Garden Center was prepared to serve the public. They had lines up and safe distances marked. Their roses were stupendous! It made us sad to think that these beauties were not being snapped up and planted all over San Antonio. Hopefully we will eventually be able to attend the Botanical Garden's herb garden and make sure the weeds don't take over.

New instructions to Weed and Gloat

Team : go outside and weed for an hour. Then come inside, fix a cup of coffee & a snack, then call one another and catch up on things.

We miss you all, and can hardly wait until we meet again in the garden.



Feel welcome to come to join us next month in the sunshine.

Next Weed and Gloat is on Monday April 27, 2020. To be included on our notification list, contact robinmaymar@gmail.com

IN THE GARDEN APRIL 2020

HERBS It's not too late to set out transplants of perennial herbs. From now throughout the summer, plant basil, which likes the warm weather. If watered, basil will grow up until first frost in the fall. Cool weather annuals planted late this month will go to seed near the end of June (examples are dill, cilantro, parsley.) Weed and water as necessary. Enjoy your garden, everything is taking off!

GARDEN Keep pulling weeds- don't let them go to seed. Tomatoes can be planted in the garden now. Mulch them with leaves, cocoa shells, lawn clipping or other material to avoid blossom end rot. Use agricultural corn meal as a top dressing to prevent mold splashing up on plants when watering.

BIRDS: The yearling purple martins should still be arriving to colonize new breeding sites and will continue arriving for an additional 4 to 6 weeks. Martins can be attracted to new housing through May.

The following are attractive plants to hummingbirds and butterflies, experts say, and are well-suited to S. Texas landscapes because they are drought-resistant.

Hummers: autumn sage, Carolina jasmine, ceniza, coral honeysuckle, lantana, red yucca, Turk's cap, trumpet vine, flame acanthus, columbines, desert willows, coral bean, wild azaleas, brownfoot, ocotillo, and every kind of salvia, penstemon and pentas. **Butterflies** are attracted to masses of flat-faced flowers: agarita, butterfly bush, Indian blanket, mealy cup sage, purple coneflower, summer phlox and Texas bluebonnet; also sunflowers, rosinweeds, wild ageratum, palmleaf eupatorium, monardas, verbenas, lantan, pavonaia, plainsman, spectacle, bottlebush, hibiscus, Turk's cap and Virginia sweetspire.

YARD: Mow live oak leaves and let them decompose on the lawn or use them for mulch. If your pecan trees showed small leaves and few nuts last year, the trees probably need zinc. Spray it on the emerging leaves or apply a chelated zinc source to the soil. Resist the urge to fertilize your lawn until you have mowed "lawn" grass (not annual grasses and weeds) Select and plant water-saving ornamental grasses to add height, texture and color to landscape. Direct seed warm-season flowers such as marigold, zinnia, larkspur and moss rose in well prepared beds.

PESTS Watch for aphids on new growth. Tender growth on roses is especially susceptible. Use general insecticides. For organic control, try insecticidal soap or neem oil.



ABSCONDED IDEA: Our neighbor has a fruit tree that tends to grow straight up, as our Kafir lime tree does. In order to reach the fruit bearing branches, he uses weights on the highest limbs, made from terra cotta pots, wire, shower rod rings and weights (found objects such as old rusted padlocks, keys, pieces of chain, rocks with a hole through them). We used old pieces of chain here, It takes a light hand, Too much weight and the bow breaks, too little and the bow is way out of reach. Because these have the curtain rod hook, you can move them up and down the branch until you find a good bend in the branch. Plums should not be pruned, so this is ideal for them. The neighbor has peaches and pears done this way also.

QUESTION: If you have read this far the editors would like to know... Is this too much information? Not enough? Or is it ok. This section is a condensation of 12 pages. We want to make it relevant, but not overpower the reader with too much. We invite feedback.

Culinary Contributions

RV Family Paella Recipe with revisions from our March 12 meeting.

Use a Pella pan large enough for 18-20 people

As with many family recipes, this one takes a lot of prep: chopping, cooking, adding this and that. Carmen suggests you do this with a group and expect to take a long time. Enjoy the day with friends.

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ pounds of chopped tomatoes
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 cup of olive oil
- ½ pound of spicy dry Spanish chorizo cut in small slices (Palacios brand)
- ½ pound of fresh peas
- ½ pound of fresh green beans cut into 4 cm pieces.
- 1 green bell pepper cut in 1.5 cm pieces
- 14 spare ribs (Chinese cut style)
- 14 chicken drumettes (or frog legs)
- 1 pound of beef sausage, cut into 1 inch pieces (Boar's Head)
- 1 ½ pounds of clams
- 1 pound of medium peeled shrimp
- 16 deveined giant shrimp
- 2 pounds of original Uncle Ben's rice (not instant)
- 2 liters of chicken broth, heated to a low simmer
- 1 can of red piquillo peppers (HEB brand Roasted whole piquillo peppers)
- 1 teaspoon of paella dye
- 1 ½ grams of saffron threads
- ½ pound of mini octopus (baby octopus)
- ½ pound of squid tentacles
- 1 pound of frozen artichokes

Preparation: (continues on next page)

Start by seasoning the ribs with salt, pepper, and sweet Hungarian paprika on both sides. Put a little olive oil (about 2 Tbsp. to cover the surface of the pan) in a non-stick frying pan, place only one layer of ribs in the pan, seal the ribs very well on both sides, turning them over so that they are cooked on all sides. Once they are well sealed, transfer to a tray and put aside
(Or refrigerate until use the next day.)

Do the same with the chicken wings.



In the meantime (*or day 2*), cut the sausages, the green beans and the bell pepper. (*we cut a unique fancy shape for each one*) Cut the piquillos into long thin strips (1/2 inch wide), they will be final decorations on the top.

Put the broth on low heat and keep it warm during the time you are adding it to the paella.

Cooking the tomato sauce base takes time: In the same frying pan, first add a little olive oil (1-2 tablespoons), then fry the onion until it is translucent, add the garlic and when it is fragrant, add the tomato and fry until everything is very well cooked. Medium high for 45 minutes or so. The sauce will go from a bright red to a rusty red color.

While that is simmering, in a small cast iron frying pan, toast the saffron lightly (*use your fingers to toss the threads, when it is too hot to touch, the spices are done*) When cooled, grind the spices in a mortar. Then dissolve them in about two cups of hot broth. Add the coloring for paella and stir everything very well until it is completely dissolved. (See label in photo. Too much saffron gives a soapy flavor but you want to get that saffron color)

Put the paella pan on the fire and add the rest of the olive oil (use your good judgement here, enough so that it cooks but is not swimming in oil) until it is hot, add 4 cups of hot broth and stir everything very well until the bottom of the paella pan is covered.

Assemble and bake:

The rack should be in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Put the ribs and the chicken in the bottom of the paella pan, if necessary, add more hot broth and start to put the rice in by fists, spreading it evenly over everything.

Put the paella in the oven and bake for about 10 minutes. (moisture in the oven will keep the rice moist enough.

Add the sausages, green beans and peppers, after a few minutes put the chorizo, octopus, squid, clams, artichokes, peas, shrimp, and piquillos.

Add hot broth as needed and let it cook for about 15 minutes. Do not stir! This is the rule of Paella! Be careful not to run out of broth, if the paella gets dry and the rice has not finished cooking yet add more hot broth. And give it a few minutes in the oven. The rice should appear moist, but not wet Take a grain to see if it is moist to the center of the grain.. You should not fee a hard middle part. The clams should be opened. Take it off the heat and enjoy!

CRAB QUESADILLA from Mike Belisle

Ingredients:

1 lb. crab meat
1 ½ cup pico de gallo
1 lb shredded cheese
12 flour tortillas (or corn tortillas if preferred)
Salt and spices of your choice

Mix crab meat and pico de gallo. Spread shredded cheese on one tortilla, cover with crab-pico mix, cover with shredded cheese, top with another tortilla. (Push it down a little to compress it)
Heat in skillet or microwave until cheese melts. Let cool and then slice into quarters or desired pieces.



BUSINESS MEMBERS

WE THANK OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT.

MENTION YOUR S.A.H.S. MEMBERSHIP WHEN YOU PATRONIZE THEM!

 <p>Natures Herb Farm 7193 Old Talley Road Lot #7 San Antonio, Texas 78253 Email: naturesherbfarm@att.net Website: naturesherbfarms.com</p>	 <p>Nick and Liz Campanella Garden Construction and Maintenance Check our website for services and prices Website: http://uprootedgardens.com 210-842-5613</p>
<p>Health by Choice <i>San Antonio's "go-to" group offering Natural Health Solutions</i> Sil & Yoli Huron, BA, CNHP Certified Natural Health Professionals (210)-735-9053 (210) 213-4852 Email: health4ever@barleybaby.com www.barleybaby.com</p>	 <p>David's Garden Seeds 7717 Tezel Road San Antonio, Texas 78250 Website: https://www.davids-garden-seeds-and-products.com/</p>
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