

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLV, NUMBER 5



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
MAY 2022

Co-Editors Linda Alderman (ewalderman@comcast.net) & Janice Freeman (janicehfreeman@comcast.net)

May 2022 Calendar

- May 7, Sat. 11:00 am** **Members Only Potluck and New Member Orientation** at the Southside Place Clubhouse, 3734 Garnet St., Houston, TX 77005
- May 10, Tues. 10:00 am** **Day Meeting** is cancelled.
- May 13 & 14, Fri. & Sat 10:00 am** **Westbury Garden Workdays** at 12581 Dunlap Street, Houston, TX 77035
- May 16, Mon. 7:00 pm** **Full Moon Ramble** (Zoom gathering for Members Only)
- May 18, Wed. 7:00 pm** **Evening Meeting** "Southern Grown Herbal Tea Blends" will be presented by **Kim McHugh**, Certified Tea Blending Master and creator of **McHugh Tea Room and Gifts** in Bellaire, TX. The program will be in person at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004). Watch your email and our Facebook page for updates and current COVID-19 guidelines.
- May 21, Sat. 10:30 am -12:30 pm** **May Lagniappe - Something Extra** "The Joys of Backyard Bee-keeping" in the backyard of **Maria Treviño** and **Donald Burger**. RSVP with **Karen Cottingham**
- May 25, Wed.** **Nominations for Annual Garden Donations Due** Submit to fordes.julie@gmail.com

June 2022 Calendar

- June 10 & 11, Fri.& Sat 10:00 am** **Westbury Garden Workdays** at 12581 Dunlap Street, Houston, TX 77035
- June 14, Tues. 10:00 am** **Day Meeting** is cancelled.
- June 14, Tues. 7:00 pm** **Full Moon Ramble** (Zoom gathering for Members Only)
- June 15, Wed. 7:00 pm** **HSA - STU Annual Members Meeting** (Zoom gathering for Members Only)
- June 25, Sat.10:30 am -12:30 pm** **June Lagniappe - Something Extra "The Comfort of Chai - Warm, Spicy, and Healing"** at the home of **Elizabeth Grandich**. Customize your own chai tea blend with Ayurvedic practitioner **Asal Shokati** and enjoy some traditional snacks from **Pondicheri Bake Lab + Shop** in Houston, TX 77098

Newsletter deadline: the 25th of every month is strictly enforced (June Editor is TBD)



Happy Birthday!

5/05 - Angela Roth

5/13 - Jane Littell

5/15 - Carol Cobb

5/18 - Cynthia Card

Herbs for
Taurus
Mint, Thyme,
Violet, &
Catnip



Chairman's Corner

Greetings,

Come reconnect with old friends and meet our newest members at the **May 7 Members Only Social and Potluck Luncheon**. This event was designed to give STU members a chance to enjoy time with each other. Picture one of our wonderful evening meetings from the past, with a few little additions.

We will start at 11 am with an opportunity to grab an herbal beverage and mix and mingle with your fellow "herbies". We will have a membership table where new members can pick up a name tag. We also have a limited supply of STU 50th Anniversary pins if you do not already have one. You can "talk herbs" with your fellow gardeners at the plant exchange. After our "happy hour", we will enjoy our wonderful potluck lunch and then have a short PowerPoint presentation designed to inform our new members (13 since 2020) about the unit, but I guarantee even if you are a long-time or not-so-new member you will learn something of interest or (more likely) remember something you had forgotten! We are also designing an interactive herbal trivia game for everyone to play and winners will get to take home one of the beautiful centerpieces from the tables. I hope that many of you will be able to attend. There is not much parking near the Southside Place Clubhouse. Please try to carpool if possible. Of course, you may pull up to the entrance to load and unload.

Don't forget your table service, potluck dish, plants to share and **please wear your name tag**.

June 15 will be the STU Annual Meeting. We will be on Zoom this year because of a change in schedule at Cherie Flores. We hope that you will make every effort to attend. More information will be forthcoming.

The STU Annual Meeting happens every spring and is very important as it marks the end of one HSA-STU year and the beginning of the next. To close out the year Officers and the Committee Chairs prepare end of year reports for their section. We posted these on the website last year. June is also the end of the fiscal year; the Treasurer files a financial report for the past year and also proposes a budget for the upcoming year. Proposals in the form of motions from members are heard, discussed and voted upon. Traditionally we have proposals for financial support for area gardens.

This year, we will vote on nominees for the office of Treasurer (**Maria Trevino** has graciously offered to be Treasurer for another two-year term) and approve a budget for 2022-2023. If submitted, we will also vote on any motions submitted by members.

Until next month,
Julie





Remember to bring-

- Potluck Dish
- Plant Exchange
- Own Dinner Service
- Own Beverage Container
- Name Badge

URGENT REQUEST

Catherine O'Brien NEEDS HELP to set up & take down the tables and chairs. If you can volunteer or if you know of someone who could help, contact her.

Vibrio13@gmail.com or

281- 467-1139.

Setup begins at 8 a.m.

Submit written proposals to Julie Fordes by May 25th.

Gardens that will be supported will be determined by a vote of the membership at the Annual Meeting on June 15th.



Annual Charitable Garden Donation





*Announcing Our HSA-STU
May Evening Meeting
"Southern Grown Herbal Tea Blends"
Presented by Kim McHugh*



*Certified Tea Blending Master
Creator of McHugh Tea Room and Gifts*

Join Us on May 18, 2022



May Lagniappe Event - "Something Extra"
"The Joys of Backyard Bee-keeping"
May 21, 2022, 10:30am - 12:30pm



Join Us in the Backyard of Maria Treviño
and Donald Burger

Art by Claire Jones See <https://thegardendiaries.blog/>

RSVP with Karen Cottingham at karen.redbrick@gmail.com

Enjoy Honey-Based Treats and Beverages with Friends!



BACK TO OUR ROOTS

Julie Fordes

Thanks to all those who have been caring for the garden lately. Our workdays have been very successful. However, you don't need to wait for a workday to go down to the garden. Anyone in STU is welcome to go down to the garden outside of the scheduled workdays. I have been scheduling workdays about once a month, but as we all know, gardens need a lot more care than that! If you are willing to go, but aren't sure what to do, give me a call. There are plenty of members who have been to the garden before who can show others what's happening. You have seen their pictures in the newsletter before.

It is time to harvest the comfrey leaves and flowers. Comfrey is known for its skin healing properties. We usually make an oil infusion using either fresh or dry leaves. The oil itself is a good way to apply healing comfrey, but we have usually made a salve of comfrey combined with calendula and other herbs for Herb Fair. The first step is to pick the leaves and flowers. Don't be too prissy about this; you can take whole small plants and lots of leaves from larger plants. No matter what you do, this plant will come back! When you get home give them a rinse (the leaves are growing pretty close to the ground) and dry them either by hanging or lying flat. Store in airtight containers and label!!!

We also have lemongrass that is ready to harvest. We use it for tea, so we want to end up with small pieces for steeping. Good instructions are on our website under Growing Herbs and Harvesting, Drying and Storing Herbs. Here are a couple of additional hints, gather a nice bundle and tie a string around it. Then, cut the bundled stalks down to about 5-6 inches from the soil. You have something that is easier to work with now. It will be easier to cut it into the small pieces while it is fresh. I use the sturdiest scissors I have. Then dry the pieces and store as usual. Here is an interesting video of a Hmong mother and daughter harvesting their lemongrass. They harvest with cooking in mind instead of tea. I am intrigued by the bundles they make out of the leaves. I wonder if they would dry well in that state and could be used for the tea pot or the soup pot. Watch the video and let me know what you think.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDubTMLo_GE

Here is how the garden looks now: (from near-far) we have turmeric, butterfly pea (just planted), calendula, oregano, sage, thyme, holy basil (coming back from last year), chamomile, comfrey and lemongrass.

WESTBURY COMMUNITY GARDEN WORK DAYS

Friday and Saturday
May 13 and 14 @ 10 AM
12581 Dunlap Street 77035



TWO DAYS TO VOLUNTEER

Fertilizing, aerating, planting seeds
and transplants for the spring.
Whatever needs to be done.

Come on out and join us!!!
Bring a mug, I will bring hot water
and we can take a break with some
fresh herbal tea.

Julie



Herbs Make Scents

May 2022



Dry & Save These Herbs

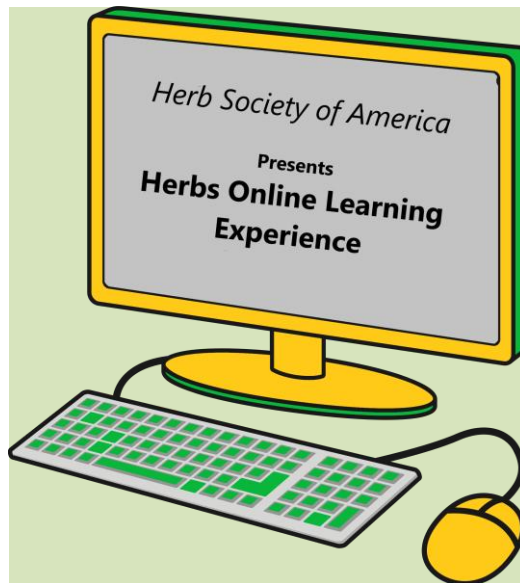
- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Calendula Flowers | Red-Stemmed Apple Mint |
| Chamomile Flowers | Rose Petals |
| Lemongrass | Roselle (Hibiscus) |
| Lemon Balm | Rosemary |
| Lemon Verbena | Sage |
| Mexican Mint Marigold | Spearmint & Peppermint |
| Oregano | Stevia |
| Passionflower (New) | Thyme |

We will make our special tea blends & sell at our fundraising events.

Visit: [Harvesting, Storing & Drying Herbs](#)

Have You Heard About HSA's Learning Platform?

Dig into [HSA's new online learning platform!](#) The first course, *Introduction to Herbs*, offers three hours of content, downloadable resources, and quizzes. More content will follow including videos, favorite webinars from the library, demonstrations and workshops. The introductory course on growing and using herbs will be taught by **Bevin Cohen** for HSA.



Bevin is an herbalist, gardener, seed saver, educator, writer, owner of **Small House Farm** and founder of the the **Michigan Seed Savers Exchange**. "I attended some of Bevin Cohen's Webinars during the pandemic, and he was very entertaining and lively, plus his information was extraordinary." Posted by a STU Member, Houston, TX.

Herb Society of America, South Texas Unit, Madalene Hill Scholarship

In March, **Catherine O'Brien** sent out scholarship applications to 25 colleges and universities around the State of Texas. One complete application and the required reference letters have already been received, and we expect more since the deadline is not until **May 1st**. In the meantime, if you know of any deserving college students who are studying agribusiness, agricultural sciences, or horticulture; or ecology or environmental science with a focus on botany, let us know so we can send him or her an application. We will also consider students majoring in biochemistry, cellular biology, genetics, or molecular biology if their academic interests are plant-related. More information can be found on our website at <http://www.herbsociety-stu.org/scholarship-award.html>. Scholarships are awarded to undergraduate students first, but graduate students may also be considered.



Garden Tips for May*

The beginning of May finds us outside earlier in order to beat the heat that is fast approaching. We are trying to pot up all of the basil seedlings that germinated, move herbs into larger pots, and trim spent blooms off of the roses, sweetpeas and the cornflowers in order to encourage more blooms. We need to pull out lettuces that are going to seed and plant more basil and okra in the vegetable garden.



Other vegetables and herbs that can be planted now include long beans, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, sweet potatoes, arugula, anise hyssop, garlic chives, ginger, lemon verbena, lemongrass, Jamaica, patchouli, pineapple salvia, rosemary, scented pelargoniums, sesame, and turmeric.

Flowers that can be planted for the summer garden are ageratum, amaranth, angelonia, begonias, black-eyed susans, coneflowers, cosmos, cleome, geraniums, globe amaranth, hibiscus, impatiens, lantana, marigolds, melampodium, pentas, periwinkles, portulaca, purslane, salvias, scaevola, summer phlox, sunflowers, tithonia, torenia, verbena, and zinnias. Take care to move geraniums and scented pelargoniums into part shade or full shade if necessary during the hottest months.

This month is the best time to divide and reset chrysanthemums by planting new shoots as these make better plants than the old center roots. I like to grow small-flowered pink daisy mums and yellow daisy mums near the oreganos in the back yard. Also, I treasure the 'Country Girl' mum I received several years ago at the Herbal Forum and in October it was blooming beautifully in the Herb Gardens at Festival Hill.

Continue to add at least 2 inches of mulch to your garden in order to discourage weeds, conserve moisture and keep roots cooler. Check potted plants frequently to make sure that they have not become root-bound because they can quickly become wilted and unhealthy. Harvest seeds of coriander, dill, mustards, arugula, mizuna, poppy, and larkspur for planting next fall.

You will be happy that you have worked hard to get your garden into shape when June arrives with its much warmer temperatures. By then we will be changing into summer gardening mode--gardening very early in the morning or late in the evening and seeking shade at every opportunity!! So get out there, and start working to help you and your herbs beat the heat.

Beth Murphy Garden Coordination Chair

*Reprinted from May, 2010 *Herbs Make Scents*



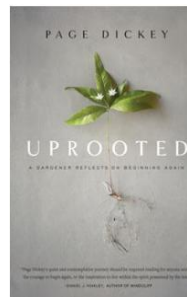
BOOK C O R N E R

If you have suggestions for books or other media members might like, submit your suggestions to Linda Alderman at ewalderman@comcast.net



The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA

Booklist Recommendation



In **Uprooted: A Gardener Reflects on Beginning Again**, Page Dickey reflects on this transition and on what it means for a gardener to start again. In these pages, follow her journey: searching for a new home, discovering the ins and outs of the landscape surrounding her new garden, establishing the garden, and learning how to be a different kind of gardener.

Speakers Bureau

Catherine O'Brien spoke at the Country Village Women's Group on Mediterranean herbs on March 24. There were about 30 women in attendance. Catherine demonstrated how to transplant basil that she had rooted in water, and gave away a jar of Italian Seasoning, made from a blend of her dried Mediterranean herbs. A delightful evening was had by all.

During the pandemic last year, **Karen Cottingham** kept people entertained as she presented "Growing Herbs for Use, Insight, and Delight" to Urban Harvest and to the Houston Urban Gardeners, and she presented "Herbs in the Headlines: Notable Women in the Plant Science" at last year's Annual Meeting of HSA. We have begun to develop a short list of topics on which we can speak to ladies or gardening groups.

If you know of a group that is interested in having a speaker, please contact **Catherine O'Brien** at Vibrio13@gmail.com or **281-467-1139**. And please contact us if you are interested in joining the Speakers' Bureau.



Speakers Bureau



Susan Gail Wood



“Pioneer Potpourri” By Susan Wood

April 14th Virginia Camerlo and I traveled to Brenham, TX for the Pioneer Unit meeting featuring me as guest speaker. In addition to my power point presentation and extensive display (see photos) I prepared a special “Pioneer Potpourri” for all 47 members in attendance. This meeting was their first to include potluck lunch since the pandemic began and it was spectacular. On the drive back to Houston we stopped for a brief tour of **The John Fairey Garden** in Hempstead. The day was perfect for a trip to the country with plenty of bluebonnets and Indian paintbrush still blooming between Chappell Hill and Brenham.

Pioneer Potpourri by Susan Gail Wood

April 14, 2022

Fixatives:

1 cup (4 oz.)	Allspice berries, crushed	2 cups (1.5 oz.)	Vetiver root, rough cut*
1 cup (3.5 oz.)	Cinnamon, 3" sticks, crushed	1 cup (3 oz.)	Clove buds, crushed

Dried Bulk Materials:

1 lb.	Calendula flowers	½ lb.	Rose petals
½ lb.	Lavender flowers	½ lb.	Lemon Verbena *
½ lb.	Lemongrass *	¼ lb.	Black bamboo *
¼ lb.	Vetiver leaves *	¼ lb.	Redbud leaves*

Essential Oils:

40 drops	Cedarwood	150 drops	Cinnamon
100 drops	Orange, sweet	100 drops	Lime
60 drops	Patchouli	80 drops	Spearmint
100 drops	Ylang ylang	60 drops	Nutmeg
100 drops	Lemongrass	80 drops	Bergamot
120 drops	Star anise	160 drops	Grapefruit
150 drops	Clove	150 drops	Lavender

Preparation time: 1 hour

Covered for 1 week to develop finished fragrance

*Materials dried from my garden

Other materials purchased online from San Francisco Herbs: (sfherb.com) and Vitacost (VitaCost.com)



Herbs Make Scents

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*Day Meeting
Creates Decorative Eggs
Using Natural Resources*



A good turnout and a beautiful day for the Day Meeting brought lots of fun and fellowship. **Donna Wheeler** hosted the gathering and made Madalene Hill's Rose Geranium cake. Donna presented a program on the history of egg dyeing over several centuries. Some interesting processes and traditions of egg dyeing are from the Ukraine. Donna researched and taught the group techniques for dyeing with natural dyes from food infusions. Decorative eggs were created by attaching herb leaves from Donna's garden to hard-boiled eggs. The herb leaves were secured with a nylon. Participants then placed them in jelly jars filled with natural food dyes and took them home to soak and dry. Attendees were **Benée Curtis, Nita Rowe, Dena Yanowski, Donna Yanowski, Janice Stuff, Beth Murphy, Virginia Camerlo, Lois Jean Howard, Pam Harris, Janice Dana, Donna Wheeler** and visitor **Jennifer Valero**.



Singin' the Blues A Sunday Afternoon Cyanotype Workshop

Karen Cottingham



What a lovely way to spend the afternoon - combining the beauty of plants with our own creative imaginations to create botanical art.

As we gathered in cyanotype artist **Caroline Roberts'** backyard, workshop participants **Cynthia Card, Elizabeth Grandich, and Giselle Grandich** enjoyed delicious pastries from **Bobby Jucker's Three Brothers Bakery**. Thank you, Bobby!



Janice Yoo, Shaniece O'Rear, and Melanie Nelson taking notes in our poolside classroom, as **Caroline** explains the history and technique of cyanotype imaging.



Herbs Make Scents

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Cyanotype is an imaging technique that dates back to the infancy of photography. Paper, or sometimes fabric or other materials, is pre-treated with a solution of iron salts that react with ultraviolet radiation to produce a gorgeous deep blue.

We started by arranging pressed botanical specimens onto the pre-treated paper. We had plenty of beautiful plant material from our participants' home gardens, Caroline's dried botanical collections, and through the generosity of **Dr. Joe Novak**, from the Holistic Garden at Rice University. **Bee Holleran** and **Elizabeth Grandich** are seen here carefully arranging their specimens.

When the arrangement is just right, it is secured by glass and clips, and set in the sun to develop. The areas covered by plants remain white, while the exposed areas react with the ultraviolet rays and turn blue.





Herbs Make Scents

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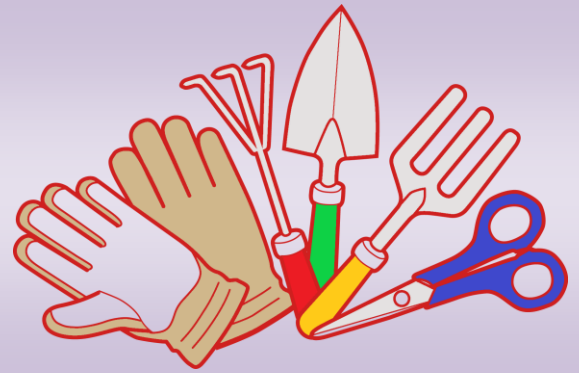
After a quick wash, the image appears! The blue will darken further over the next twenty-four hours.



Giselle Grandich, Karen Cottingham, Angela Roth, Janice Yoo, and Bee Holleran are all smiles! The artwork in the left upper photo was created by **Elizabeth Grandich**. All photos provided by **Karen Cottingham**. Many thanks to our hostess and instructor **Caroline Roberts** for such a lovely experience!



Join the South Texas Unit
and GROW with US!



Membership Tips: Membership Categories

Carolyn Kosclskey, Membership Chair

Membership renewals will be coming up this summer July 1, the beginning of our fiscal year. Last count from the website membership page showed a total of 65 members, 55 of those listed as “**Active**,” which is the majority of the membership. Page 22-23 of the latest Directory (violet color) list the requirements of these categories and fees. The membership fee for Active membership is \$67.50, \$55 of that goes to the national organization Herb Society of America. **Sustaining** membership, a member who has been in good standing for at least three years but is unable to meet full requirements for Active membership, is \$80 and \$55 of that goes to the national organization.

DIRECTORY UPDATE COMING OUT SOON! Our latest Directory (violet color) published more than 6 months ago is ready for a “refresh.” Updates will include new members not listed in the Directory and members whose contact information has changed. If you have changed any of your contact information listed in the Directory (violet color) or on the website please send those changes to <mailto:stxu.membership@gmail.com> by the end of May.



A single act of
kindness throws
out roots in all
directions, and the
roots spring up and
make new trees.

—AMELIA EARHART

RD

Vintage Art Deco Gardening Poster, 'L' Art L'Ecole', 1931 by R. Rochett



AT-HOME RECIPES



Photo by Dana DeVolk from Unsplash

AT-HOME RECIPES

May 2022

Carolyn Kosclskey

The month of May has many opportunities for celebrations beginning with of course May Day on Sunday, May 1st. Cinco de Mayo falls on the next Thursday. Original celebrations began in California where the holiday has been observed annually since 1863 and gained nationwide popularity in the 1980s as a nod to Mexican America culture. The “Run for the Roses,” the first race of the Triple Crown, will be on Saturday, j

This year Mother’s Day falls on May 8th and many children may continue treating their mothers and grandmothers by preparing a meal at home this year. Celebrations of motherhood go back to the ancient Greeks and Romans and Mother’s Day roots can be traced to the Christian observance of Mothering Sunday. This day is observed on the fourth Sunday of Lent, and symbolized Christians’ return to their mother church. In America it became a secular tradition which gradually disappeared when fully merged with the current Mother’s Day in the 1930s.

ITALIAN COUNTRY FEAST

From the files of Cynthia Card

Bob and I moved to Houston from Dallas in 1988 and shortly thereafter I took some cooking classes with Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay. I think they were held at the Rice Epicurean on San Felipe or at La Panier off of Holcombe. I took many wonderful classes back then and got to meet and learn from many Houston chefs. Ouisie, who recently passed away, was another one of my favorite chefs that I was fortunate enough to hear speak at Rice Epicurean, and I still use several of her recipes.

I have made the Italian Country Feast many times and it is always a hit. Bake in a large foil pan (no one has to worry about returning your dish), cover with foil wrap and take to family gatherings or for a hearty, no fuss dish for new parents or new neighbors. It could be easily changed to a vegetarian dish by just leaving out the chicken and sausage and adding different vegetables that you may have on hand.

Ingredients

- 1-pound fresh Italian sausage
- 2 cups chopped cooked chicken (I just poach mine in a little chicken broth)
- 1¾ cups herbal white sauce (see below)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg



2 large potatoes, peeled, sliced thin
½ cup thinly-sliced onions
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
½ cup grated Romano cheese
10-12 ounces of fresh spinach
½ cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
Grated Romano and chopped parsley for garnish

Preheat oven to 450°. Skin sausages, crumble and cook over medium heat in skillet until color changes. Add chicken, 1-cup herbal white sauce, salt, pepper and nutmeg; stir gently to mix well. Pour mixture into 9x13 inch baking dish.

Place raw sliced potatoes and onions on top of meat mixture. Brush with 2 tablespoons olive oil, sprinkle with Romano cheese and additional salt and pepper. Bake until potatoes are crusty brown and tender, about 45-50 minutes.

While dish is baking, cook spinach briefly in water clinging to leaves after washing. Drain and chop coarsely with kitchen shears. Add remaining sauce to spinach. Salt if necessary. Keep warm until potatoes are done.

Sauté mushrooms in remaining oil; reserve until needed. When potatoes are tender, remove from oven and spoon hot spinach mixture on top, allowing edge of browned potatoes to show. Add mushrooms, and garnish with cheese and parsley.

Herbal White Sauce

2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour
2 cups milk
1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram or mild oregano
2 teaspoons fresh thyme
½ teaspoon nutmeg
¼ cup grated Romano cheese

Melt butter in heavy saucepan. Stir in flour, then add milk, seasonings and cheese, cooking until thickened. Keep warm until ready to use. Taste for saltiness and add salt if necessary.

From Southern Herb Growing by Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay

Memorial Day is a very popular American holiday and marks the unofficial beginning of summer. Traditionally families, relatives, friends and neighbors get together at a home or in a park for a casual and fun celebratory “potluck” meal cooked outdoors along with planned outdoor activities. A typical menu might include hot dogs, links, hamburgers or steaks grilled outside, a cooler with ice and iced drinks, and sides and desserts generally brought by the guests.



WATERGATE SALAD

A retro-chic dessert from the 70s

There aren't many popular foods for group events named after government scandals, although many recent political events have upset appetites at dining tables. However, a politics-themed concoction from the seventies continues to shine at potluck events. Watergate Salad, also known as Green Fluff, Green Goop, or Pistachio-Pineapple Delight, is a rather strange dish. It's a relic of the mid-1970s, when instant gelatin was still a new invention. Unfortunately, unlike Deep Throat's identity, the source behind this unusual recipe name remains shrouded in mystery. Kraft claims the dish is based off a recipe it purportedly invented: Pineapple Pistachio Delight. But some amateur food historians have dated versions of that recipe back to Royal Instant's Pistachio Pudding, which was on the market 15 years before Kraft released its version. NPR, [in its examination of the dish's history](#), pins the origin of the name on a cake that was also called a "Watergate" dessert. That cake, which included pistachio Jell-O in the batter, and sometimes in the icing, ostensibly got the moniker because of all the nuts in both the recipe and in the DC political and residential complex. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 1 (3.4 ounce) package instant pistachio pudding mix
- 1 (8 ounce) can crushed pineapple, with juice
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ½ (8 ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed

In a large bowl, mix together pudding mix, pineapple with juice, marshmallows, and nuts. Fold in whipped topping. Chill.

Note: This recipe lends itself to many variations, starting with using whipped cream instead of whipped topping. *Pink Pineapple Fluff* substitutes 16-ounces of cream cheese and 10-ounces of maraschino cherries plus ½ cup shredded coconut. Some recipes add in 16-ounces of cottage cheese. *Mandarin Orange Watergate Salad* leaves out the pistachio mix and adds two 16-ounce cans of mandarin orange slices, a 4-ounce jar of maraschino cherries, ½ cup shredded coconut and 16-ounces of whipped topping. <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/13811/watergate-salad/>

As we move into early summer and warmer weather with access to more produce from our gardens at the market, don't miss opportunities to enjoy healthy eating by selection of dishes with emphasis on plant based foods. Dietary Guidelines for Americans reminds us of portion control and selecting nutrient-dense foods and beverages with a variety from each food group. Make every bite count!

Flag Day is on Tuesday, June 14th and is the second of four patriotic holidays ending with Labor Day on September 5. "Remembered family recipes" from these holidays will be featured for each holiday. Members celebrating their birthdays that month (Mary, Sara and Tamara) will be invited to submit a recipe they remember from years past, along with memories of how their summer was celebrated.

While Strolling Through the Park One Day...

By Karen Cottingham



These fetching little flowers seen recently in Hermann Park are called "Summer Snowflakes", or more formally, *Leucojum aestivum* L. Photo credit: Karen Cottingham

On a recent stroll through Hermann Park, I came across these dazzling little bell-shaped flowers, each one suspended from gracefully arching stems like a Victorian earring. Gently bobbing in the breeze, the translucent blossoms shimmered like pearls in the late afternoon light. Bees were busy nosing under the dainty scalloped skirts, doing the things bees do. It was a captivating sight that set my imagination soaring.

Each of the otherwise pristine petals was marked with a unique little smudge of green, as if visited by a toddler with finger paints, or maybe a band of mischievous fairies frolicking in the night. Or could each smudge represent the lingering kiss of an angel?

What message each charming splotch might convey, I didn't know - maybe they serve as nectar guides for the bees, or perhaps the dots form a coded message in fairy-language. Maybe they spell out a hidden prophesy yet to be unravelled by a diviner of the future.

Surely, I thought, there would be folk tales inspired by these charming little flowers. A maiden, for example, might braid snowflakes into her hair to signal she's ready for marriage. I could also imagine a legend of glistening white bells wondrously arising from a child's grave to offer consolation. And their magical flower music must surely ring through the forest calling fairies to their festivities - we mortals just can't hear it.



I was also looking forward to the charming vintage illustrations I just knew I would find. Surely there'd be a troupe of dancing fairies spinning ecstatically in their "Snowflake" gowns, the forest green bodices (actually the plant's prominent ovaries!) giving way to extravagantly full green and white scalloped skirts. Or how about an affectionate frog couple keeping cozy and dry under their stylish umbrella?

Expecting to find abundant folklore on such fetching little flowers, I was surprised to find the internet uncharacteristically silent on the subject. Somehow, the lovely snowflakes seem to have been completely overlooked in the sphere of floral symbolism and legends.

This is what I did find out, though.



Record-breaking snowdrop, *Galanthus plicatus*
"Golden Tears" Photo Credit: gardensillustrated.com

Summer Snowflake, along with the similar Spring Snowflake, comprise the entire genus *Leucojum* in the Amariyllidaceae family. The two snowflakes are closely related to the more famous snowdrops, which consist of around twenty different species from all over Europe and Western Asia and make up the genus *Galanthus*. Snowdrops are a wildly popular bulbous perennial, especially in Britain, where a few months ago, a single rare bulb sold at auction for £1,850 - but that's a story for another day. I'm not sure why the record-breaking *Galanthus plicatus* Golden Tears, pictured left, is so special, but then, I am not obsessed with snowdrops like the galanthophiles are!

Getting back to the story, a pharmacologist collecting folk remedies in rural Bulgaria in the 1950s noticed that villagers in the remote areas rubbed the leaves and bulbs of the native snowdrops on their foreheads to relieve headaches. Snowdrop brandy was used for the treatment of senile tremor, disturbed vision, and fatigue, and alcoholic extracts of snowdrops were believed to prevent or treat memory loss.

A few years later, a Russian pharmacognosist (a pharmacist who studies medicinal substances obtained from plants) began hearing miraculous reports about the healing properties of snowdrops growing at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains in the former Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia.



Bulgarian villagers in the 1950s Image Credit: bulgaria.com



When the children of the area developed symptoms of an illness which, as reported, “was obviously poliomyelitis”, the women prepared a decoction of snowdrop bulbs for them to drink. It was said that all of the children given the treatment recovered completely without any neurological damage.

The names and faces of these healers were long ago lost to history, but perhaps these vintage photos from Bulgaria and the USSR in the 1950s will give an approximation of what the women and children might have looked like.

It was the era of the Cold War, and the Eastern Bloc was effectively cut off from the rest of the world by the Iron Curtain. No one in the Western world even knew of the wild flower that might prevent the tragedy of post-polio paralysis.



The chemical make-up of snowdrops was naturally of great interest to scientists in Bulgaria and the USSR. Of all of the pharmacologically active alkaloids isolated from snowdrops, galantamine, which enhances nerve impulse transmission at the synapses, was the first one identified and the most significant. It was first used in Eastern Europe to treat paralytic conditions such as poliomyelitis, myopathies, and myasthenia gravis, and for the reversal of neuromuscular blockade during anesthesia. As the pharmacological potential of galantamine became more apparent, a more reliable source of the substance than the tiny and difficult to grow snowdrop was required. This is where *Leucojum aestivum*, the summer snowflake now illuminating a corner of Hermann Park, comes in. Even though galantamine can be chemically synthesized in the lab, the summer snowflake, with its robust alkaloid concentration, is still the primary source of this important medicinal substance. To protect the native plants from being over-harvested, plantations of *L. aestivum* have been created in Bulgaria to supply the many tons of leaves used every year by the pharmaceutical industry.

A girl and elderly woman in Soviet Russia. Photo
Credit: Life Magazine, Russian Women of the 1950s

Detailed research only began in the West when Bulgarian scientists discovered that galantamine slowed the progression of cognitive decline in Alzheimer's disease. Galantamine improves communication between nerve cells by increasing the levels of the essential neurotransmitter acetylcholine, which is involved in learning, thinking, and memory processes. While galantamine can temporarily alleviate some of the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, it cannot stop the progression of the disease.

Galantamine is also found in many other plants in the Amariyllidaceae family, notably from the following genera: *Amaryllis*, *Hippeastrum*, *Lycoris*, *Ungernia*, *Leucojum*, *Narcissus*, *Galanthus*, *Zephyranthes*, *Hymenocallis*, and *Haemanthus*.



In the Black Mountains of Wales, a sheep farmer named Kevin Stephens grows acres of daffodils, the Welsh national emblem, to provide the galantamine needed to improve the lives of Alzheimer's patients. Due to the high altitude and harsh winters, his daffodils produce more galantamine than daffodils grown anywhere else.

And scientists are not finished searching for potential therapeutic benefits of galantamine, especially in the treatment of addiction disorders. Studies suggest that galantamine could reduce the craving for multiple drugs of abuse, including cocaine, opioids, and nicotine.



The climate in Wales produces daffodils rich in galantamine

Galantamine also holds promise in the prevention of permanent neurological damage due to binge ethanol exposure during adolescence.

And for those looking for "an 'effective, needle-free option' for tighter, firmer, more lifted skin around the face, eye, and neck area", there is an anti-aging skin product just for you. According to promotional material, "the inclusion of *Leucojum aestivum*, a rejuvenating plant extract, limits muscle contractions across these areas to prevent accelerated signs of aging - a benefit that has led reviewers to refer to the serum as "Botox in a bottle."

So the dainty little plant in Hermann Park has led us on a journey from Bulgaria to the Black Mountains of Wales, and from the treatment of disabling and life-destroying diseases to "Botox in a bottle."

To wrap up the loose ends of the story, I finally found out that the green splotches are, in fact, "nectar guides" for pollinators. Not exactly the work of frolicking fairies, but exceptional nonetheless.

Typically, nectar guides are created to entice pollinators into the centre of a flower where they will be rewarded with nectar or another substance. In return, pollination is accomplished. Win-win, right? In the case of summer snowflakes, though, the "nectar guides" are clever ploys - empty promises of nectar that doesn't exist. By the time the pollinator discovers there is no nectar, it's probably already covered in pollen.

And the deceptive green splotches are so effective in attracting pollinators that the flower has no need to produce a volatile scent to call them in.

No nectar and no scent. These innocent-appearing flowers definitely have a shadow side. I started thinking of snowflakes as seductive sirens rather than symbols of purity, as the wicked Snow Queen rather than the innocent maiden.

At first I was disappointed in the otherwise lovable plant's strategy of deception, but then I had to admire its efficiency and frugality. Why make scent and nectar if it's not necessary?



And if a flower is going to the trouble of creating the perfect "nectar guide", why not go all the way and make them green? A "guide" full of chloroplasts provides the extra energy needed for the flower and developing seeds!

The ingenuity of nature is endless.

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