

# Kentuckiana Herbal Thymes

“For Use and For Delight”



## From the Chair

Greetings Everyone,

As the song goes “Oh the weather outside is frightful...” Mother nature has certainly put a crimp in our plans the past two months. Our January unit meeting had to be cancelled due to treacherous ice and snow. We postponed the February meeting due to impending snow. And then it was also cancelled by snow.

We were, however, able to gather most of the Spring Education Day Committee chairs, vice chairs, and program committee members on the last day of January. Preparations for our big event are going ahead thanks to the efforts of all of these dedicated women. I am going to use this space to update all of you on their progress, just in case the weather interferes again.

All speakers are confirmed, bios and photos received. Save the date and event flyers posted on our website and Facebook. We have a fantastic line-up of speakers who will present on herbal topics ranging from gardening and cooking, health and wellness, to decorating with herbs. Truly fulfilling the promise of providing “Pearls of Herbal Wisdom.”

Deb Slentz agreed to develop the flyer. This was no small feat. Deb is working with a new computer and updated software. I think we all can relate to the frustrations inherent in this situation. Dee Dee Nunn has taken on the distribution of the flyers. Finding and converting email lists and navigating g-mail’s limitations and appeals process, Dee Dee has sent out hundreds of save the date emails, 91 snail-mailers and over 1,300 digital flyers! Jett started getting registrations in the mail within days.

Maggie Oster has the centerpieces well in-hand and within budget. Lorraine Hughes is gathering goodies for the giftbags. If you know any businesses that would like to put freebies in the bags, please let her know. Deb Knight has scoured local art/craft fairs over the past year for new and diverse vendors. She has sent out eight vendor packets and, to date, five have confirmed their participation. Donna Poe and Susan Hart, chairs of the Raffle and Marketplace Committees respectively, are organizing their volunteers and planning for another year of productive fundraisers.

We owe all of these members a huge debt of gratitude. Spring Education Day is our major community education effort. It takes all of us to pull this off.


On a different note, I would like to tell you about another community organization that some of our members are involved with. Let Us Learn is a local non-profit dedicated to increasing access to healthy food through education, school gardens, affordable meal prep classes, and local farm partnerships. Members Donna Poe and Mike McKinley volunteer at the Fairmont Elementary school garden. My partner and I support the organization with various volunteer projects. They will be holding a fund-raiser, Tastebuds Throwdown, on March 10th at 6:00 p.m. at The Mansion, 1866 in New Albany, Indiana. If you have grandchildren, or other youngsters in your life, check out their new Earth Stewards Camp. Contact information for both programs can be found in Potpourri. It always makes me proud to see the impact our members have in the larger community.

~ Jo Ann Hughes, Chair

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**Happy Birthday!**

**March**  
 Erica Stemler  
 Lisa Whitaker  
 Lorraine Hughes

**April**  
 Mike McKinley  
 Anna Parker  
 Maggie Oster  
 Juanita Popp

## Upcoming Meetings

**March 11 @ 1 PM**  
**“Middlemarch”**

*Park Christian Church, New Albany*

**Program:** Spring Education Day Prep.

**Refreshments:** Pizza provided by club  
 Drinks and other provisions: Kathy Strecker, Maribeth Kelly

**Herb of the Month:** No Report

**Book Report:** No Report



**April 9 @ 1 PM**  
**“The Dirty Dozen”**

*Park Christian Church, New Albany*

**Program:** Susan Hart - Herbal Household Cleaning Products

**Refreshments:** Judy Cato, Lorraine Hughes, Edith Davis

**Herb of the Month:** Donna Poe - Lemon Balm

**Book Report:** Dee Dee Nunn - *The Big Book of Homemade Products for Your Skin, Health, and Home* by Jan Berry

## The Kentuckiana Herb Society’s 30th Annual Spring Education Day

### *Pearls of Herbal Wisdom*



**Saturday, March 29, 2025**

*Huber’s Orchard & Winery, Plantation Hall  
 19816 Huber Road, Borden, IN 47106*



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## Gifts and Crafts from the Garden

*A Book Report by Erica Stemler, KHS Member*



*Gifts and Crafts from the Garden* by Maggie Oster, 1988

This book serves as a “jumping off point” for crafters who are eager to apply their skills to materials found in nature or in their own backyard. Maggie does a beautiful job of describing the ins and outs of preserving plant material for the various crafts she highlights. She then divides the second half of the book into chapters based upon the type of plant material which will be used, such as Crafts from Corn and Wheat, Crafts from Pressed Flowers, and Crafts from Fruit and Vegetables.

I initially thumbed through the entire book before then returning to chapters or sections of particu-

lar interest. Many of Maggie’s project ideas are beginner-friendly, and would make wonderful additions to our Spring Education Day marketplace.

Important concepts from the book:

1. When gathering plant material for crafts, Maggie recommends collecting and drying “twice as much as you think you’ll need,” given that “a certain amount of the material will not dry as perfectly as you want.”
2. Rubber bands are preferable when material is dried upside down in bunches, as “the bands will tighten as the stems dry and shrink.”
3. To prevent dried plant material from shattering, “lightly coat dried flowers and grasses with hair spray, clear plastic craft spray, or clear lacquer spray.” Between my teenage daughter and me, we have plenty of hairspray in our house, so this tip is a cheap way for me to preserve the treasures from my garden!

## Borage

*By Deb Slentz, KHS Member*

Borage (*Borago officinalis*), also known as “starflower,” is an easy, fast-growing, annual herb with greenish-gray stems and leaves covered in prickly fuzz. It comes from the Mediterranean region. While a somewhat gangly plant, its star-shaped vivid blue flowers are a knockout. The plant can grow to a height of 2-3 feet at maturity in about eight weeks.



Borage is easy to plant from seed in early spring when the threat of frost has passed. Plant in a spot that received at least 4 hours of direct sun, about ¼ to ½ inch deep, and give it some space, maybe 12 – 18 inches. Borage is tolerant of most soils as long as it is well-draining. Staggering planting times will give a longer bloom period, and a longer harvest time.

Once the plant is established, borage will self-seed. Or, you can shake the tiny black seeds from the flowers and collect them to store over winter and replant them in the spring anywhere you prefer. Deadheading will encourage more blooms. And if you prune the plant back by one half midsummer, it will grow new tender leaves for a late summer harvest. Water regularly, but don’t allow the soil to become soggy.

Leaves and flowers are best used fresh. The leaves have a cucumber-like taste, often used in salads or as a garnish. They can be added to soups and stews, infused in vinegar, or dried to make tea. The stand-out flower has a honey-like taste and is often used to garnish desserts

and cocktails. They could be crystallized to decorate cakes, or frozen in ice cubes to embellish lemonade.

In traditional medicine, borage is used as a sedative and a diuretic, and as a treatment for seizures and kidney disease. Today, commercial cultivation is mainly as an oilseed. Because of its high amounts of omega-6 fatty acids, borage oil is anti-inflammatory. Researchers want to

know if it could help for health conditions like: eczema, psoriasis, asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, gastrointestinal problems, diabetic nerve pain, menopausal symptoms, depression, and diabetes.

Folklore attributes borage with the ability to make men and women merry, to comfort the heart, dispel melancholy, and offer courage.

Though not your perky marigold, or cute bright nasturtium, the main reason I like borage is because it is a workhorse in the garden. Borage not only entices pollinators to visit, it also is my number one choice for a companion plant in my vegetable garden, attracting scores of voracious beetles to it, keeping them off of my tomatoes, squash, and strawberries.

If you’ve never grown borage before, I highly recommend giving it a try this spring. It is a multi-purpose plant that deserves a spot in any garden. Order some seeds pronto, as plants are often difficult to find.

# The Herb Gardener: A Guide for All Seasons

A Book Report by Belinda Seacat, KHS Member



**The Herb Gardener:  
A Guide for All Seasons**  
by Susan McClure

If you are creating a new herb garden or revisiting an old herb garden, this book is a must have for your library. It is easy to understand and covers all the basics of growing herbs, planning and designing your herb garden (including design illustrations), and how to care for your garden in each of the four seasons. Some seasonal topics include:

**Spring:** Seed sprouting (including how to encourage reluctant sprouts), scarification (nicking the seed before planting), and which herbs grow best from seeds, stems, or cuttings. Also, the importance of sterile soil, proper spacing, fertilizer, mulching, and dividing.

**Summer:** Troubleshooting diseases, insects, dead heading, mulching, and harvesting.

**Fall:** Bringing herbs indoors, planting bulbs, herbs to plant in fall, and cleaning up your garden.

**Winter:** Starting an indoor herb garden and mulching pros and cons.

She also covers preserving (drying and freezing), nutritional value, recipes (herbal vinegars, savory cheeses and butters, pesto, herb sugars, and herb teas), and crafts (potpourris, sachets, and wreaths).

Included is a **grower's guide** which shows each plant grouped with the family, genus, and species. The pictures are large and help to easily identify your herbs. If you have questions, *The Herb Gardener* has answers.

## Through the Garden Gate



**KSB Garden** - ~ Jo Ann Hughes  
The ice and snow of early January took its toll on the garden. On Thursday, January 9th, Donna, who works in environmental services at the school, sent me this photo of the Tinkerbelle lilac tree we planted in

2023.

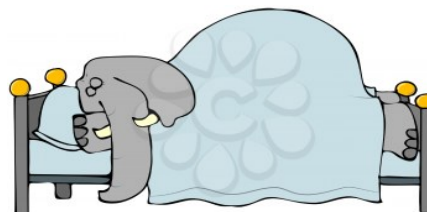
Later in January, I visited the garden to see how it fared. Unfortunately, the lilac tree lost three large branches, and there are long gashes in the trunk.

Another casualty of the winter storm is the giant allium bulbs. Many of the bulbs had broken dormancy (or never entered it) and some were over two feet tall in December. Needless to say, they are now a mass of dead leaves and stems.

On the bright side, both photos show the resilient bright green of creeping thyme and the dusky blue-green foliage of hardy lavender plants. All is not lost. So goes the life of a garden.



**The Old Capitol Herb Garden** - ~ Joan Burton  
The garden is asleep. Shhh.



## Sweet Annie

By Maribeth Kelly, KHS Member

Sweet Annie, *Artemisia annua*, of the family Asteraceae is a large diverse genus of plants belonging to the Daisy family with almost 500 species. Common names include Sweet Wormwood, Annual Wormwood, Annual Mugwort, and in Chinese, Quig-quo. I found with so many names it is difficult to correctly ID or research the plant. In Richter's catalog, I discovered it under Wormwood and *Artemisia annua*.

Sweet Annie has an erect brownish stem and grows naturally three to four feet tall; in cultivation, it can grow taller. The leaves are divided by deep cuts into two or three leaflets and have a pleasant scent. The flowers are small, arranged in loose panicles of yellow-green. The plant is usually harvested at the beginning of flowering.

Historically Sweet Annie addresses feelings, such as loss or abandonment, with great understanding and strength. It supports consciousness and an ability to respond to new events with an open heart, wisdom, and sensitivity.

I found two different conflicting statements as to the source of Sweet Annie's name. One suggests it was named after Artemus, the goddess of the hunt affiliated with wilderness, native childbirth, and care of children. The oth-



er believes Sweet Annie's namesake to be from the Greek Queens Artemisia I and II.

Native to China, the plant has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for many years, notably as part of the "Project 523", a Chinese secret military program to find an anti-malaria medication due to the number of malaria cases in the Vietnam War.

Today the World Health Organization does not recognize artemisia for the treatment of malaria, stating there is no scientific evidence it is effective in treating malaria or cancer. Many however believe that it has the potential to offer antiviral, antimicrobial, and/or anti-tumor properties. Some healthcare professionals recommend sweet Annie in the form of tea or pressed juice to reduce fever or swelling.

Currently Sweet Annie is suggested for formal herb gardens or as a scented herb with an attractive appearance. Also, as a plant in Shakespearean gardens, being known for its bitter taste in witches brew. Sweet Annie can be used in formal floral arrangements due to its pleasant scent and appearance. I have discovered it in open fields and in Harrison County parks.

## Potpourri

1. If you have a library card, you have access to the Libby app. It is a fabulous free source of audio-books and e-books. Did you know Libby also has thousands of magazines from all over the world? Cynthia Hardy brought this to my attention at a recent meeting. Right now, I am thoroughly enjoying flipping through all sorts of craft magazines searching for Marketplace ideas. Next up will be food and gardening.

2. The National Gardening Association ([garden.org](https://garden.org)) has a marvelous tool for helping you decide when to plant your garden, based on percentages of frost risk for your specific location. <https://garden.org/apps/frost-dates>

3. For indoor seed starting, use the information you gathered from above and the recommended number of weeks before transplanting that you will find on the seed packet. Don't have your seeds yet, but want to get your indoor seed starting operation set-up? Go to

Seed-Starting Date Calculator | When to Start Seeds Indoors for recommended dates for many vegetables, flowers, and some herbs.

4. Tickets for The Tastebuds Throwdown, a friendly chef competition benefitting Let Us Learn, can be found on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2nd-annual-tastebuds-throwdown-cooking-for-a-cause-tickets>

5. Earth Stewards Camp, for children ages 9-14, hosted by Let Us Learn, Inc. is March 24—28, 9:00-1:30 @ Mt. Tabor United Presbyterian Church. For more details, contact Gina Brown at [gbrown@letuslearnkyinc.org](mailto:gbrown@letuslearnkyinc.org)

6. Sunnyside Master Gardner Seed Savers Spring Open House is March 13, 4-7 pm at Purdue lobby. (See attached flyer).

## Preparing for Spring Education Day

### Regarding Raffle Items / Baskets

From Donna McCubbins and Barbara Lusco-Peppers  
Here are a few guidelines for our newer members:

- Each member is expected to contribute gift items or a themed basket for the raffle table.
- All items should be new and have a minimum value of at least \$25.
- Make the baskets pretty!
- Garden items, plants, alcohol, and food items are very popular.
- If there are small items, the committee may combine them into a single basket.
- We will have shrink wrap at the March meeting and assist in compiling the baskets if anyone need help or ideas.
- If you have any questions, please contact Barb or Donna.



### Suggestions for Marketplace

Hopefully everyone is busy creating interesting herbal crafts and delicious treats to sell in the Marketplace. Susan and Cynthia offer these suggestions:

- Baked items & other consumables: must have ingredient labels and club name attached to packaging (see the article on labeling below). Price all items in dollar amounts. Items priced higher than \$5 did not sell well. Suggest packaging cookies 3 or 4 to a bag. Make mini-loafs or cupcakes. Attractive packaging is important.
- Lotions/cosmetics & other herbal products: Also need ingredient labels.
- Other ideas: scrubbies, greeting cards, tote bags, potpourri, Easter-themed items.
- Items for the **Free Will Table** are appreciated: books, garden magazines, photo frames, garden items, glass and ceramic, fabric items, wearables, jewelry, containers, etc.

Please bring items with you on set-up day, Friday March 28th.

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Hart or Cynthia Hardy.

**Set-up Day**  
**Friday, March 28, 12 –5:00 pm. Everyone's participation is appreciated!**  
**Thank YOU!**

### Labeling homemade items

A topic that most always surfaces any time we're asked to prepare items to sell on behalf of the Kentuckiana Herb Society is "what needs to be written on the label?"

- ◇ All ingredients in order of how much is used. (If using 3 c of flour and 2 c of sugar, list flour first followed by sugar and the other ingredients in declining order.)
- ◇ If using a boxed item like a cake mix or brownie mix, list the ingredients as listed on the boxed item.

- ◇ Include: "This product is home produced and processed and the production area has not been inspected by the State Department of Health."
- ◇ Include: Kentuckiana Herb Society or KHS.
- ◇ Include: 2009 Beckin Dr, Floyds Knobs, IN 47119.

### Example

Ingredients: Flour, sugar, milk, egg, vanilla, salt  
This product is home produced and processed and the production area has not been inspected by the State Department of Health.  
Kentuckiana Herb Society



The Herb Society of America

The HSA Website has a wealth of information. Forgot your login? It is your email address as user name and HSA1933 for password.

## Chamomile Mini-Pound Cakes

Recipe adapted from [seriouseats.com](http://seriouseats.com)

A suggested recipe to bake and sell at the Marketplace highlighting our Herb-of-the-Year, Chamomile.

### Ingredients:

- 10 chamomile tea bags
- 2/3 c boiling water
- 2 cups flour
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 2 1/2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 c sugar
- 2 tsp finely grated lemon zest from 1 lemon
- 6 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 tsp pure vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease and flour 3 -5 mini loaf pans, depending on the size of the pans.

2. Steep tea bags in boiling water for 10 minutes. Squeeze out all liquid. Allow to cool.
3. Combine flour, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl; set aside.
4. Beat butter, sugar, and lemon zest on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
5. Reduce mixer to low and add flour mixture in three additions, alternating with tea. Combining well.
6. Add vanilla and beat just to combine.
7. Add batter to prepared pans.\* Bake until toothpick comes out clean, about 45 minutes.
8. Cool 10 minutes in pans, then invert onto cooling rack and cool completely.

\*Important note.

Do not fill your pans too the top, which will cause overflow. Fill only 3/4 full.



*Nothing is so beautiful as Spring -  
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush.  
Gerard Manley Hopkins*



**Kentuckiana Herb Society** - [www.kentuckianaherbsociety.org](http://www.kentuckianaherbsociety.org)



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