



Winter/Spring 2023

Some Big Herbs



Pin Oak

Fringetree

White pine

Tulip Poplar

# OUR MOUNTAIN Herbs NEWSLETTER

## ABOUT WVHA

West Virginia Herb Association  
How to join, our mission,  
Board members & staff PG2

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Decisions from annual fall board  
meeting PG6

## EVENTS & UPDATES

Spring Gathering: May 20, 2023  
Other near & far events PG4

## FEATURE ARTICLE

Tea Herbs in Early America PG5

## ARTICLES

Wellness Garden PG4  
Seed Saving & Diversity PG5  
Re-Humanizing our  
Relationship with Plants &  
Gardens Make Us Healthy PG6

## HERBS IN THE NEWS

Herbal studies and updates PG3

## LEARN & CREATE

How to make herbal solutions &  
spring recipes PG3

**Remember to  
RENEW YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP for 2023**

PG2

## Letter from the WVHA President

Hello Herbal Friends,

Spring is here, the freezing cold is gone, and wonderfully warming Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is the herb of the year. Dreams of vibrant, healthy gardens fill our minds and hearts with the promise of new beginnings and bountiful harvests to come.

We honor the memory of our dear friend Marion Harless by meeting with like-minded friends who share her love of Earth and Herbs. Please contact any current, old or new herbalists, gardening enthusiasts and health-conscious folks to ask them to join us for our Spring Gathering. We'll have two classes in the morning and two more in the afternoon that will feature sustainable ideas for use in your garden. There will be vendors and, remember, rooms are available in town for anyone who wishes to stay over.

Make sure to bring a small plant, seeds or more to share, if you can. I hope to see you there and remember to...  
Think Green! ~ Eve Von Deck

## SPRING GATHERING Gardening for Health

**Growing, Using and Sharing Herbs for health & well-being**

Saturday, May 20th, 2023 ~ Scan QR and see insert for more  
Seed & Plant Exchange | Nature Walk

Location: Madden Center / Timms Lounge, Davis & Elkins College  
100 Campus Dr. Elkins, WV <https://www.dewv.edu/visit/>

Bring your friends, family and children to discover growing, gardening and herbal preparations for health and well being. Listen to herbalists and naturalists to deepen your knowledge of using, growing, collecting and sharing herbs.

ENTRANCE FEE: \$10 Includes all classes and nature walk. Registration and vendor viewing starts at 9:00 am and pre-register on-line. If you want to volunteer to help you can gain free entry! Children under 12 free with paid adult.



*“My love affair with nature is so deep that I am not satisfied with being a mere onlooker, or nature tourist. I crave a more real and meaningful relationship. The spicy teas and tasty delicacies I prepare from wild ingredients are the bread and wine in which I have communion and fellowship with nature, and with the Author of that nature.”*

~ Euell Gibbons, author & wild-foods enthusiast  
Mr. Gibbons helped found, and was a charter member of the National Wild Foods Association which meets each year in North Bend, WV.



## Letter from the Editor & Dedication

**Letter from the Editor ~ Jennifer Geib, Herbarist**  
I have truly enjoyed publishing the last two WVHA newsletters as I always learn more about herbs in the process. This winter I took to studying older herbal publications and books and ran across articles published in the times of war, particularly during WWII. The articles felt relevant to today with so much turmoil in our world. I learned how important native plant medicine was during those troubled times and how in even earlier wars, herbs played a significant part of daily life. The feature article will take you back in time to 1775!

Today, although so much is right outside our door, we turn to the store for pre-packaged teas and drinks as well as for bottled herbs. Our Spring Gathering has a focus of *Gardening for Health*, and I encourage you all to get outside in your yard, identify the herbal tea plants, or grow your own herbs to create healthy food and medicines.

In my first conversation with Marion Harless, she stressed so *very* strongly that all herbs must be shared. Herbal knowledge and products can be sold, but also they should be given away freely, knowing that when love is given freely, it comes back in multiples. If you know an older herbalist/herbarist, be sure to spend time with them. Their knowledge is precious and so needed in the world today, take notes, keep a journal of what you learn and be sure to share whenever possible.



**This newsletter is dedicated to Marion Harless** who passed into spirit on January 17, 2023, at the age of 87. Marion called herself an Herbarist (in her description: one who grows and uses medicinal plants). She lived on a well-tended wild garden in Kerens. In addition to co-founding the WVHA, she was a co-founder of the Mountain State Organic Growers and Buyers. She taught extensively and creatively about medicinal herbs, edible landscaping, and the many uses of native plants. We will miss her strong, guiding, and herbally dedicated presence. Here are some links where you can read more about Marion.

<https://wvfolklife.org/2019/03/22/the-state-folklorists-notebook-people-need-to-know-about-plants-herbarist-marion-harless/>

<https://www.wvhighlands.org/article/marion-harless-earth-days/>

### Commonly used terms for making herbal infusions

**Infusion** – a tea made from the soft part of a plant, primarily leaves and flowers. Boiling water is poured over the leaves and a lid put on to prevent loss of volatile oils. The infusion is left to sit for a period of time.



## Learn & Create

### A Herbal Project: Making Herb Infused Oils & Vinegars

One way to boost your health and enjoy a culinary experience at the same time is to make infused oils and vinegars.

To read more, please become a member.

### Spring Rhubarb Chutney

From The Kitchens of South Waikato, New Zealand, found in a cook book provided by Anne Nye, former WVHA President.

4 cups (1 kg) chopped rhubarb  
4 cups (1 kg) sugar or equivalent sweetener  
2 & 3/4 cups raisins  
1/4 C sliced ginger (peel on is ok)  
1 C chopped onion  
1 t crushed garlic  
2 & 1/2 cups vinegar  
Juice of 1 lemon ~ 1/4 cup  
1/4 t salt (not ionized)

Combine all ingredients except the ginger in a pan. Tie ginger in muslin or a couple layers of cheesecloth and bruise with a mallet. Place bag in pan and low-boil all together until thick – 3/4 to 1 hour. Remove ginger bag. Pour mixture into clean, hot jars and put on lids. Let cool and store in refrigerator up to 6 weeks. Water bath can if you want to store on the shelf. Goes with most meats and is a good sandwich and salad condiment. Can be used as a dip or added to cheese and crackers.



### Nettle Chai Recipe

From Leslie Alexander, PhD & Herbalist

One of my favorite recipes for nettle is a nettle chai. It's a slightly unusual use of nettle (yes, I know) as we often think of nettle as a sound resource when working with allergies, skin ailments and as mineral support. This chai can be all those things and more. It's a tasty treat and good medicine.

Try mixing:  
3 teaspoons of dried nettle leaf  
1 cardamom pod (green)  
Cinnamon, either 1/2 stick or a pinch of powdered cinnamon  
2 cloves  
1 pinch of ground nutmeg  
1/2 teaspoon dried organic orange peel (optional)  
Once mixed, add boiled water and steep for 15 minutes. I like to do this covered and often simply sit a saucer over my mug. If you like a milky chai, try blending in some oat, almond, or coconut milk.

*“Every home should have an herbalist.”*

*quote from Dr. John Christopher  
American herbalist and naturopath*

## HERBS IN THE NEWS & FUN FACTS

Two common wild plants contain extracts that inhibit the ability of the virus that causes COVID-19 to infect living cells, a recent Emory University study found. Scientific Reports published the results — the first major screening of botanical extracts to search for potency against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In laboratory dish tests, extracts from the flowers of tall goldenrod (*Solidago altissima*) and the rhizomes of the eagle fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*) each blocked SARS-CoV-2 from entering human cells.  
<https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/979396>

Extracts of olive (*Olea europaea*) leaves are rich in polyphenols that have direct and indirect antiviral effects. A new study shows that adjunctive treatment with olive leaf extract could reduce hospital lengths of stay by up to 2 days in acute COVID-19 patients. <https://holisticprimarycare.net/topics/herbal-medicine/olive-leaf-extract-reduces-acute-covid-symptoms/>

**The United States is one of the top 10 bio-diverse countries on the planet** and we all know that WV is abundant with wild and native plants. Let's work to preserve and support the nature that surrounds us. Did you know that in 1900 there were fewer than 1 million deer? Now there are more than 27 million eating our precious plants. Source: WV DNR 2023 Calendar. <https://wvdnr.gov/>

### Plant-Based Eating: Addressing Both Sustainability and Food Waste

Whether the diet you choose is vegan, vegetarian, or flexitarian, plant-based eating isn't going out of style any time soon. Plant-based diets are nothing new, but more and more products are becoming mainstream to appeal to those who recognize the benefits of going plant-based, not only for the body but for the health of the planet. <https://www.nutritionaloutlook.com/view/2023-nutrition-trends>

**Did you know that in 2014 the WVHA gave a donation of \$1000 to UPS** to support the Jim and Peggy Duke Welcome Center part of the Goldenseal Botanical Sanctuary in Rutland OH? <https://unitedplantsavers.org/ups-goldenseal-botanical-sanctuary-exploring-the-relationship-between-people-and-plant/>  
<https://www.iucnredlist.org/>  
<https://unitedplantsavers.org/species-at-risk-list/>

## CONTACT US



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## About Us

Founded in 1992

West Virginia Herb Association is a non-profit, educational organization whose mission is to promote the ethical and environmentally sound propagation, cultivation, harvest and use of herbs in West Virginia. The WVHA provides a forum for those interested in herbs by creating opportunities for members to get to know one another, to network, share knowledge and experience, and build community. We are a diverse network of people with a wide range of knowledge across many regional states. Our primary focus areas are: herb cultivation, medicinal herbs, culinary herbs and herbal crafts.

### 2023 WVHA Board

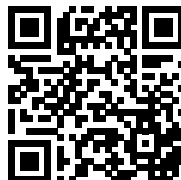
President ~ Eve Von Deck  
Vice President ~ Sierra Cox  
Secretary ~ Jennifer Geib  
Treasurer ~ Theresa Gain  
Members At-Large ~ Christina Adams,  
Joan Beard and James McCormick  
Newsletter Editor ~ Jennifer Geib

### Our Founders

Nona Conley	Sue Meyer
Marion Harless	Nicole Molnar
Dot Montgillion	Linda Cristen
Myra Bonhage Hale	Nicole Gauthier-Schatz

### How to Join

Yearly membership fees  
Individual: \$20.00  
Family: \$30.00  
Business: \$50.00  
New members can join any time.  
Membership dues are due on or before September 30 (or at Fall Conference), and renew annually.



See page 3 for contact info. Join and receive the Complete newsletter. [Click here](#) for membership information or scan QR.

# Wellness Garden: Growing a Garden for Health and Well-Being

Anne Gibson

Gardens provide unlimited sensory experiences. The fragrance of beautiful flowers or scented foliage; the taste of a homegrown ripe, juicy tomato; listening to birds singing or bees buzzing; plant textures that are enjoyable to touch, like soft Lamb's Ears leaves; and of course, the visual beauty we can enjoy. Harvesting and savoring the flavor of home-grown foods is one of the most satisfying rewards of growing an edible garden. The therapeutic benefits of gardening can also help us cope with the daily pressures of life. With many of us spending more time at home than ever before, our gardens have also become sanctuaries, a place to retreat from the world to find peace of mind. Nature is a powerful healer and self-care is more important than ever. A garden acts as a refuge, a space to relax and reflect, and a soothing tonic for the soul.

To read more, please become a member.



## EVENTS NEAR & FAR

**Heirloom Plant Sale: Prickett's Fort**  
The annual Heirloom Plant Sale is provided by the Marion County Extension Master Gardeners on Saturday, May 6, 2023 from 10:00AM until 2:00PM. All proceeds from the sale of plants go to maintaining the gardens at Prickett's Fort State Park. This activity is free and open to the public.  
<https://wvstateparks.com/event/heirloom-plant-sale-pricketts-fort/>

**Hearth Cooking Demonstration: Prickett's Fort.** Come out and tour the fort and smell the food cooking over an open hearth, the way food was prepared during the colonial period of our history. Recipes will be available upon request. Regular admission applies. This activity is at Prickett's Fort State Park on Tuesday, July 18, 2023 from 11:00AM – 2:00PM.  
<https://wvstateparks.com/event/hearth-cooking-demonstration-pricketts-fort/>

**2023 Good Medicine Confluence July 18, Colorado.** Presenting the 12th Annual Good Medicine Confluence July 18th-23rd, 2023 – in the spectacular mountains near Lake George, Colorado. Enjoy over 150 fresh, specialized, personalized, and often unique topics for both advanced practitioners and newcomers to herbalism including home medicine making, treating illness, brewing, distillation and more! <https://planthealer.org/registration.html>

**Herb Society of America: 2023 Educational Conference, Herbal Lagniappe en Louisienne**  
April 27 - 29, 2023, Louisiana. For details visit: [https://www.herbsociety.org/news-events/2023-educational-conference-details.html?blm\\_aid=22453](https://www.herbsociety.org/news-events/2023-educational-conference-details.html?blm_aid=22453)

**The 13th Annual Gaia Gathering: Journey from Root to Nectar.**  
A beloved annual event in Central Virginia that connects women from our bio-region and beyond. We circle for healing, wisdom sharing, creative expression, and celebration. We gather to build community, deepen relationships, and nourish our collective power as healers and change makers. <https://www.gaiagatheringva.com/>

**Medicines from the Earth, 2023 Symposium, in N. Carolina. Theme: Aging, Stress and Neurological Conditions: Tradition and Modern Science.** Highlights: 24 lectures to choose from, including two panels, herb walks and demonstrations, plus Friday intensives and field studies, a keynote address with Chris Kilham, plus an evening concert with Doug Elliott and friends. <https://www.botanicalmedicine.org/medicines-from-the-earth-herb-symposium-2023/>

**Also see this page events at Mountain Rose:** <https://blog.mountainroseherbs.com/upcoming-herbal-events>



*"A garden connects us with Nature to heal and nourish our health and wellbeing on many levels. With everyday stresses, a garden not only helps renew our physical bodies but also gifts us a way to nurture our mental, emotional, and spiritual health too."*

~ Excerpt from Wellness Garden: Growing A Garden For Health and Well-Being by Anne Gibson

## Tea Herbs in Early America by Hellen Noyes Webster Reprinted, from The Herbarist, A Publication of The Herb Society of America, No. 6, Boston, MA 1940.

The American colonist brought with him to the new country the Old World prejudice against drinking water as a beverage. Apart from light wines, ales and strong waters, the only other source of their drinks was robs, hot drinks, teas, tisanes brewed from the herbs of the homeland. Almost immediately in this new land the women were forced to test the beneficence of new simples as substitutes in making their gentle, purifying tisanes. Sassafras, spicebush, sarsaparilla, pine buds, birch bark, salina, or the inner layer under the bark of the spruce, Labrador tea, reindeer moss, Indian posy, wild ginger, American elder, and a score of other native herbs were quickly learned and accepted by the colonist, and herb tea was both his drink and his medicine. Whether true or not, that story of Joe Pye coming out of the woods with his arms full of boneset to cure the Pilgrims, will make me forever look with affection at the Joe-pye weed in our meadows.

A partial list of native **Liberty Tea Herbs** and some aromatic plants known to have been used for hot stimulating drinks in early America. **Anise goldenrod** (*Solidago odora*), leaves taste like sweet chervil. **Black spruce** (*Picea nigra*) and **Red spruce** (*Picea mariana*), young tips, leaves, inner bark called "Salvia".

To read more, please become a member.

### Seed Saving & Seed Diversity importance

**1943 Field Notes** From *The Herbarist*, Issue 9, 1943) **Save All Seeds** – A graphic reminder of what the scorched earth policy will mean comes in a plea for seeds of all kinds in a European review published in New York. Not only has the commercial production of seed been brought to a standstill in Europe, but the results of years of scientific production, new strains and precious equipment have been deliberately "liquidated". Added to this, nature's own reproductive work has been stopped by the sterilization and neglect of the soil on a vast scale. Raising seed for our own uses at least relieves the pressure upon public supply.

### Diversity Importance

From *J.L. Hudson Seedsman Catalog*  
Introducing the J.L. Hudson Seedsman catalog. They have been selling seeds for over 113 years since the founding of the firm. If you write to them they will send you a free catalog and the seed prices are extremely reasonable. In the new 2023 Catalog they remind us of the ongoing governmental influences that are continuously trying to clamp down on the free flow of seeds, as the USDA continues to over-regulate small farms and independent plant-based businesses, while leaving the larger farms to do their damage. Many seeds are just unavailable for distribution any longer. Do collect and share your seeds freely to keep our native herbs and plants growing, as well as heritage vegetables.

Here is a plant description from the catalog, and a plant we can all agree is at the top of herbal medicinal usage, and a beautiful garden plant as well. Yarrow (*Millefolium, sp.*) 'Milfoil', 'Kwayu'Hayipsnl' (Chehalis Indian name meaning 'squirrel-tail'). White 1/4" flowers in flat 2-6" clusters in June to September. Aromatic hardy perennial to 2-3 feet, with delicate feathery 8" leaves. Easily grown, old-fashioned flower, giving lots of bloom for little care. Highly valued medicine in all parts of the world where it grows, used for coughs, colds, fevers, aches and pains, to stop bleeding, aid in childbirth, bronchitis, and as a tonic. Girls would put it under their pillows to dream of future lovers. Was used as a tobacco substitute, for snuff, and in place of hops for brewing beer to make it more intoxicating. Contrary to popular belief, this is a native North American plant. Germinates in 1-2 weeks. Packet \$2.50. P.O. Box 337, La Honda, CA 94020. <http://www.JLHudsonSeeds.net>.

# Re-Humanizing Our Relationships with Plants

Barbara Volk

Plants are family. They are our relations. Plants feed us. They care for us when we are sick. They take the carbon dioxide that we exhale, breathe it in and give us oxygen in return. In our dominant culture of Facebook-ing, Walmart-ing and amazon-ing, we have become disassociated with the lives around us. We have become a culture of consuming without connection.

Yet I see people searching for something different. We know deep in our core that something is missing and sometimes are not sure of how to find it. More and more folks are growing vegetable gardens, wildlife gardens, medicinal gardens; and that is how we begin. By tending the plants in our gardens, we begin to develop relationships with them. Each plant is a unique being. Some are vigorous and healthy, and some are subject to insect damage or disease, and as we tend them, we make an effort to help them all be strong and full of vitality. We begin to have a sharing relationship with these plants, and this evolves into a state of reciprocity. This simple act changes everything.

We can take it further. In Japan, they have coined the phrase “Forest Bathing”. Scientists have “discovered” that being in the forest... meditating, breathing and simply practicing awareness, creates a healing response in our bodies and minds. This experience isn't limited to being in the forest, though I highly recommend it!

I personally love the weeds that grow around me. I harvest many of them for food and medicine, and one of the things I really love about the weeds is that they are effortless! So my tending becomes more about sitting and being and breathing with them. Shall we call it weed bathing?

I encourage everyone to go out into your yards and begin to experience the weeds in a different way. Even the immigrants which so many folks dislike. Share the whole season with them from their emergence to the time that they go to sleep for the winter. As you do this, you will notice that your mind becomes quieter, your breath becomes deeper and all of your senses become heightened. What a wonderful journey you have begun. Barbara teaches herbal classes visit: <https://www.spottedhorsefarm.com/>

## Board Update and Member Information

The Annual Member's Board meeting at the Fall Conference in October 2022 was the first Conference post-covid with the previous meeting in the fall of 2019. Members voted in new board members (see page 2) and adopted a few changes.

## Gardens Make Us Healthy

*Condensed from BBC Gardener's World Magazine, UK, March 2023 issue.*

Growing even a small amount of our own food has many health benefits from the mental planning to harvest, and of course the lack of pesticides and herbicides. You are in control when you grow your own food and herbs. Home grown plants contain significantly more nutrients than store-bought. Antioxidant and nutrient levels drop every day after they are picked. One week of refrigeration can cause up to a 46% drop in nutrition levels. Also by growing your own you reduce the use of plastics and shipping thereby helping the environment.

To read more, please become a member.

*There is increasing evidence that exposure to plants and green space, and particularly to gardening, is beneficial to mental and physical health. Health professionals should therefore encourage their patients to make use of green space and to work in gardens, and should pressure local authorities to increase open spaces and the number of trees, thus also helping to counteract air pollution and climate change.*

*~ Royal College of Physicians*

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6334070/>

