



MEMORIES MUSINGS

By Cheri Sims

Cheri lives, writes and gardens in Charleston.

I am often asked what flower is my favorite and that is a really hard question because I have local seasonal favorites and I like so many flowers that will not grow in our area. I am passionate about the giant fuchsia dinner plate hibiscus for many reasons; we saw our first one twenty years ago in our favorite vacation place, Quebec City, Canada and secondly because of the grandeur of the bloom. The one we saw was 10 feet tall and had thirty (I counted them) dinner plate size blooms and the color was the most perfect fuchsia we had ever seen.

We asked the head gardener of the "Joan of Arc" gardens where we could buy this plant to take back to the USA and discovered we could not take plants across the border but he gave me the name of the Nursery which shipped internationally and we ordered the plants before we left town and had them shipped to Charleston. The two plants were on our porch by the time we arrived home from our vacation. Proven Winners describes what I think my plant is as; "Summerific Berry Awesome Hibiscus"

Growing in zone 4 (think Minnesota, Wisconsin and the like) to zone 9 (tropical climates like Florida), rose mal-low bears some of the largest flowers of any perennials. You may have heard them called

"dinner plate Hibiscus", a name coined for its huge 7-9 inch wide, circular blooms. (<https://www.provenwinners.com/>) . Both plants grew to six feet the following year and had a few blooms. Then we moved and took them with us and one of the plants died but the larger plant survived and over the next ten years grew to ten feet and produced as many as twenty blooms at one time.

We moved again but the mother plant roots were so huge we could not dig the whole thing out of the ground so we moved with about 70 percent of the root which I divided into two plants. Those two plants grew even taller than the mother plant and produced many blooms over a five year period. Last year I moved again and dug out what I thought was the whole plant of one of the plants but after visiting my previous residence early this year I discovered that some of the root was left so the new owner now has one ten foot tall plant with profuse blooming and a smaller plant which will bloom next year. The part of the plant I have at my new residence is about five feet tall and has produced twenty blooms this year. I am thrilled! I thought this Hibiscus was a delicate plant but they have proven to be quite hardy.

Over the years I have purchased many Hibiscus plant varieties but have never

been as satisfied with them as I am with my Canadian plant. Most of the plants did not survive the Illinois weather and we always thought our plant might have been hybridized to accept the cold since it was Canadian. I don't really know and none of the garden center experts have the answer either. My friend Lynette has the most beautiful burgundy Hibiscus I have ever seen and I hope it survives the cold because it is truly a beautiful plant.

I am extremely fond of the Lily plant, in all sizes and colors which influenced my love for the "Fleur de Lis" shape (Flower and Lilly in French). The first time I saw the "Fleur de Lis" was in French class in High School. Mrs. Wau-check drew the design on the black board and "Fleur de Lis" was the first French word I learned. It stuck with me and over the years I have used the design in my decorating. Last year I purchased Fleur de Lis hardware for my new kitchen and bathroom cabinets. While I love the lily plants and especially the fragrance, it is overpowering and I am a bit allergic to it. Being allergic and loving the plant is probably why I chose the design with which to decorate. I also have a giant white Lili, which topped 9 feet this year and produced 14 blooms. I had to purchase a tall tomato frame to balance the stalk ; it was so top heavy and I did not want to lose it.

Marigolds would have to be my summer favorite; I love the blooms and the fragrance and the fact that they are so forgiving. They seem to survive being water depleted and bounce right back when given a drink. They are a Sims family favorite which started when my brother-in-law was

six years old. He went shopping with his Dad and asked if he could plant flowers for his Mom because she was ill at the time and this started a life -long love of the plant in the family. We have all planted marigolds every summer since.

I am quite fond of most all herbs for the versatility and I let most of them bloom as well. Most herb grower's dead head the blooms but I like to see the blooms too. Of course, herbs are to be eaten so that it the main reason to grow them but many of them have pretty blooms. Most people do not realize that one can eat Marigolds so I always mix my herbs and Marigolds in the garden and I like to put them in my summer salads. The first time I served Marigolds was at a summer coffee-girls brunch and the pretty orange flowers graced the tops of cucumber and cream cheese sandwiches. To serve Marigolds; I caution you to make sure they are chemical free. I never use any powders or sprays on the flowers I intend to eat.

The website "Gardening Know How" states, "Marigolds as Food Marigolds have an extensive history. They were revered by the Aztecs and used medicinally, ornamentally and in religious rites. The Spanish and Portuguese explorers seized upon these golden blooms, not quite gold but golden nonetheless, and brought them back to Europe. There they were referred to as "Mary's Gold" in deference to the Virgin Mary as well as a nod to their gilded hues. Marigolds are used in Pakistan and India to dye cloth and make flower garlands for harvest festivals. Here marigolds are used as food as well. The ancient Greeks also used mari-

golds as food, or rather in it. The use of marigolds is for the most part to add brilliant color, much like saffron threads impart a gorgeous golden hue to dishes. In fact, marigolds are sometimes referred to as the "poor man's saffron." Read more at Gardening Know How: Marigolds As Food - Tips On Growing Edible Marigolds (<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/marigold/growing-edible-marigolds.htm>).

I am sharing two Marigold recipes, both of which I have made and eaten and they are delicious. They along with all my other herbs can be used in soups and salads and really make a pretty and delicious plating. Again, I caution do not use chemicals on the Marigolds you plan to use for food.

Don't just smell the flowers, eat them!

Marigold Jelly

Directions

- Rinse- 3 cups of flower petals (snip the petals w/kitchen scissors right where the green part begins, toss out the green, using the petals only).
- Pour over enough boiling water to cover and allow to steep and cool for a couple of hours.
- Strain well and add enough water to make 4 cups of liquid.
- Mix 1 box of low-sugar pectin (pink box) with 1/2 cup of sugar in a small bowl.
- Whisk the sugar-pectin mix into the liquid, along with 3T lemon juice, and bring to a hard boil in a large pot.
- Whisk in 2 1/2 cups sugar. Return to a hard boil. Boil for one minute.

(I continue to boil my jelly longer if a slightly cooled spoon of it doesn't slow-drip

from the spoon.)

- Poor liquid into sterilized jars and process in canner according to directions.

Makes 3 pints of lemonade-colored jelly.

<http://momsfrugal.blogspot.com/2012/10/marigold-jelly.html>

Marigold Cheesecake

Ingredients

- 12 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 6 large eggs, separated, room temperature
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup ground almonds
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon balm leaves
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh marigold petals
- Additional marigold blossoms and fresh lemon balm leaves, optional

Directions

- In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, butter, egg yolks and sugar until light and fluffy. Stir in almonds, lemon balm, lemon zest and marigold petals.
- In a small bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; fold into cream cheese mixture. Spoon into a greased 9-in. springform pan; place pan on a baking sheet.
- Bake at 350° for 55 minutes or until golden brown and the cheesecake pulls away from sides of pan. Cool for 1 hour; remove sides of pan and cool completely. If desired, garnish with marigold blossoms and lemon balm. Store in the refrigerator.

Taste of Home (<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/marigold-cheesecake/>)

Writer's Note: Verify that flowers are edible and have not been treated with chemicals.

REAL LIFE WELLNESS

By Dr. Bill Hemmer

Your Gut-Brain Connection

My last two articles have been a description of the latest book I read called Radical Longevity, The powerful plan to sharpen your brain, strengthen your body, and reverse symptoms of aging by Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, CNS. She boiled this very difficult topic down to seven rules to increase your ability

to have your life span equal your health span.

The seventh and final rule is Optimize your Gut-Brain connection. I have written many times about how important your Gut health is. Your Gut is made up of your mouth, salivary glands, esophagus, stomach, liver, gallbladder, pancreas,

small intestine, large intestine, appendix, rectum and anus.

As you can tell, your gut has many pieces and every one of them work together to help you turn your food into fuel and helps you get rid of toxins that have accumulated from you burning that fuel. The father of modern medicine, Socrates said that all disease starts in the gut and I totally agree with him.

What he did not understand during his lifetime is the connection of the gut to the brain. In the 1900's a German neuropathologist named Leopold Auerbach discovered nerves that he called Auerbach's plexus that

later became known as the Enteric nervous system. This nervous system can function independently from the Central nervous system and the Autonomic nervous system.

Most people have no idea we actually have three different nervous systems! But when you get butterflies in your stomach when something scares you, or have gone with your gut feeling? You have experienced your Enteric nervous system at work.

Up to 90 percent of your neurotransmitters (the substances your brain uses to control your moods and emotions) is made in your gut. So, if your gut isn't working

properly, your ability to balance and control your emotions and mood is extremely compromised. Research has been done since the mid 1900's on the effect the gut has on mood and behavior. The best book and research I can recommend on this subject is Gut and Psychological Syndrome or GAPS by Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride.

I first read this book in 2011. It changed the way I have thought about behavior and gut health ever since. What you need to know is your gut health is the key to your attention span, mood, detox ability and overall health. So, if you aren't paying attention to your abil-

ity to digest your food and eliminate toxins, your health will never be what you want it to be.

Thank God, the other side of the coin is also true. If you decide to focus attention on your gut health by eating real food, healing your gut lining and restoring your good bacteria and killing your bad bacteria, your health can dramatically improve in a very short period of time. In a matter of a few days, your mood can improve, your attention span can get better and your immune system can be improved.

Who doesn't want that?

Two EIU students selected for prestigious \$12.5K DFI Fellowships

Two Eastern Illinois University College of Education graduate students have earned distinctions as recipients of the prestigious Diversifying Faculty in Illinois (DFI) Fellowship.

EIU graduate students Nyjah Lane and Brandy Matthews each received a DFI fellowship award of \$12,500. Lane and Matthews are enrolled in EIU's gradu-

ate program in College Student Affairs.

"This is a notable distinction for our students and a testament to Eastern Illinois University's commitment to training teachers in Illinois," said EIU's L.M. Hamand Dean of The Graduate School Dr. Ryan Hendrickson. "Having two of our students receive such a significant award during

a single academic year is a monumental accomplishment and allows EIU to celebrate diversity on campus and to advocate for diversity throughout the landscape of Illinois academia."

According to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) website, DFI is a statutorily authorized program that directly addresses educational disparities in

educational attainment by race, ethnicity, income and region. The goal of DFI is to increase the number of minority full-time tenure track faculty and staff at Illinois' two- and four-year public and private colleges and universities by providing financial assistance to students with demonstrated financial need to assist them in completing graduate degree pro-

grams.

DFI Fellow recipients are strongly encouraged to actively seek and accept full-time employment in the education sector in the State of Illinois for a period at least equal to the number of years they spent as a DFI Fellow. In addition, program administrators work with higher education institutions like EIU to offer workshops and

pursue other outreach opportunities that meet the goals and objectives of the initiative.

For more information about EIU, or to learn more about its growing assortment of programs and services, visit the university's website at www.eiu.edu, or call EIU's public information office at (217) 581-7400.

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Douglas County Board authorizes joint letter to EDPR for breach of contract regarding road use

By Kendra Hennis

The special meeting of the Douglas County Board was called to order at 9 a.m. on Monday, August 2 with members Hettinger and Morris absent. The meeting was called by State's Attorney Kate Watson and Douglas County Engineer Jim Crane to discuss possible litigation with the board in reference to EDPR and the Harvest Ridge Wind Farm. The board immediately moved to closed session at 9:02 a.m. until 10:02 a.m. Upon return to open session, board member Luth

made a motion to "authorize Chairman Munson jointly with Murdock and Newman Township Road Districts to develop and send a letter on behalf of Douglas County to EDPR for breach of contract regarding the road use agreement", which was unanimously passed.

The board then moved to questions from the press and visitors. Jim Allen asked for a timeline from the board after this letter is sent. Watson stated that at this time the board will be waiting on a response from EDPR before moving forward or consider-

ing possible litigation. She also noted that they were expecting EDPR to be receiving their letter within 24 hours of the meeting. Allen additionally asked why Mr. Hettinger and Morris were absent from the meeting. County Clerk Judi Pollock said she was unsure for Mr. Morris but that Mr. Hettinger was on vacation. It was then asked about current drainage issues happening and what the engineer's plan was for that. Crane explained that there is currently difficulty with drainage throughout the 28 and a half miles that

were damaged. He said that they have an extensive and ever-changing plan for repairs, but they are all being updated and added into the contract. In closing, Luth said that "the board asks for patience, we have very good legal counsel and this is a process and we are trying to follow the process. So don't become frustrated with us, we have your best interest at heart, I fully believe. Give us time to develop what is going to happen." The board then adjourned at 10:09 a.m. until their August 18 meeting.

LLC Adult Education to offer free welding classes

Lake Land College Adult Education will be offering free welding classes beginning August 16. The classes will meet Monday through Thursday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Sullivan high school.

The class format will be a hybrid of online learning and in person coursework with two remote classes

Participants will learn basic welding techniques, such as stick welding, metal inert gas (MIG) welding and tungsten inert gas (TIG) welding as well as metal fabrication and other skills.

Upon completion of the program, students will earn a Basic Welding Certificate through the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) as

well as 11 credit hours with Lake Land College.

As well as encouraging students to earn a GED and offering resumé assistance and other resources, Lake Land College Adult Education also partners with local businesses for facility tours to give students the chance to see employers and how their businesses operate.

"We have seen a lot of success with this program," Adult Education Advisor Kyle Sims said. "We have had a lot of people who complete it go right into the field afterwards."

For more information, contact Lake Land College Adult Education at adulteducation@lakelandcollege.com or 217-238-8292.