



MEMORIES MUSINGS

By Cheri Sims

Cheri lives, writes and gardens in Charleston.

A couple years ago a popular TV gardening show aired a segment on butterfly gardens which sparked a flood of internet websites dedicated to turning your yard into a natural habitat for butterflies and birds. What this show and all the sites have forgotten to mention is that these butterfly gardens are not meant for the whole front yard so the home owner no longer has to mow the grass! Some towns even have ordinances stating front yard gardens should not look unkempt and many sub divisions include this type of gardening in their covenants.

Many of the websites have shown lovely plans for framed or bordered butterfly gardens and garden kits can also be purchased to make planting easier for the novice gardener. Better Homes and Gardens offer scale drawings of these gardens and plant listings for those who prefer not to purchase a kit. Many first time gardeners do not realize that butterfly gardens and wild flower gardens, like Victorian gardens from the past, take quite a lot of tending in order to eliminate weeds and noxious grasses. I am not as fond of the seed gardens; I find them more difficult to weed than when one can see the plants

from the start of the garden and can mulch right from the start, thus preventing weed growth.

Unfortunately, I have noticed quite a number of front yard natural gardens cropping up locally and even though I am an avid gardener I like a mowed front yard. During my walks I have chatted with a couple butterfly gardeners and opinions vary on a mowed front yard and a natural landscape. The City of Charleston owns a piece of land behind the library and at first I thought they had a great idea when they turned it into a natural setting with mowed paths for walkers but they have allowed it to become overgrown and now it is looking a bit unkempt. So it will be hard for the city to convince homeowners to mow their yards, I would think.

According to the Bellville, Il. Effinger Garden Center website "Butterflies and bees are in trouble. Their numbers are dwindling. A major culprit is the disappearance of one of the monarch's major food sources, mid western milkweed. About one third of the food we eat is pollinated by bees. Bees also pollinate trees, wildflowers and contribute to overall biodiversity. Reduced

plant diversity, lack of wild forage, disease, parasites and pesticides have taken a toll on our bee population. So what can we gardeners do?"

* Plant a wide selection of flowers, grasses, shrubs, herbs, trees, veggies- the more variety the better.

* Plant host providing plants (these are the plants that feed the butterfly larvae or caterpillars) like milkweed, parsley, fennel and rue.

* Try some native perennials like Missouri primrose, blue indigo and purple coneflower. Plant a few native shrubs like spicebush and New Jersey tea. For fall interest add a few well-behaved native grasses like little bluestem and prairie dropseed.

* Plant a colorful variety of nectar plants (these are plants that feed the adult butterfly) like zinnias, lantana, cosmos, verbena and marigolds.

* Let a portion of your yard, even if it's just a little patch by the compost pile, go or grow natural.

* Use as few pesticides as possible, or go with organic disease and insect controls. If you must spray, do so early in the morning or late in the evening, when the bees are less active. (<https://effingergarden.com/herbs-for-butterflies/>)

Herbs are welcome in a butterfly, hummingbird or prairie garden especially anise hyssop, thyme, bergamot, oregano basil, sage and dill. I have most of these plants in my garden and I like to allow them to flower and I do have butterflies and hummingbirds. I also like surround my herbs with a marigold border

to try to make the patch look less rangy. The nice thing about adding herbs is that they are not only pretty but useful in the kitchen. I have grown and dried herbs for almost thirty years now; at first it was out of necessity when I discovered that I am allergic to preservatives and pesticides which are found in most all commercial, store bought spices and seasonings. Now it has become a passion.

Most people think of herbs as seasoning for meat, soups and stews but I enjoy making and eating herb jellies, butters and jams and am always looking for new ways to use herbs. Basil pesto has become more commonplace but I enjoy making pesto with all my herbs, freezing it and enjoying it on my winter salads. The "Skinnyms" website has a recipe for herb pesto which does not use oil. I will share the original recipe and my adaption; I especially like the oil free version of pesto for freezing. (<https://skinnyms.com/how-to-make-oil-free-pesto/>)

A caution: when I purchased this house the plumbing inspector told me that I needed a new sewer line and a new water line at a cost of about \$4000. I decided to hold off and live in the house a while and see if I needed to spend that kind of money. Last winter I had a sewer overflow in the basement and called a service and had the sewer roto-roter. Problem solved and I saved a lot of money. I did continue to have water pressure problems; I could not flush the toilet and use one of the sinks at the

same time and the washer and dishwasher took an incredibly long time to load. The water pressure outside was even worse and watering the plants took way too long.

I decided it was time to get the new water line installed but something told me to call the water department first to see if they had a way of checking to see if the problem was on their side of the line or mine. I was asked if there was a pressure valve on the water meter and I did not know so a technician was sent out to check. Low and behold, back in the 1970's many of the house owners in this area decided to have pressure valves installed as a part of the work the city was doing on the water lines. I was advised that I could have the valve removed and also informed that it could do some damage but to ask a plumber. I checked with a different plumber and he said I probably would not have any problem so I requested the pressure valve be removed.

Wow! Do I have water now! I can't believe what I don't know and all the trouble one has to go through to solve a problem. Once again I have saved money, thanks to the ladies at the Charleston water department office. I can't thank them enough for taking the time to educate me and to the technician who offered his advice on the subject. I should have not believed the first plumber and paid for a second opinion in the first place but one does not always feel the need when you trust a professional. Let's hope the new water pressure does not blow the

pipes because I sure am enjoying the ability to turn on all the faucets at the same time. Oh my, I can't wait to see the next water bill!

Be aware and enjoy!

Skinnyms oil free pesto Ingredients

* 2 cups baby spinach or fresh basil leaves, or a combination (packed)

* 1/4 cup parmesan cheese recommend Dairy-Free Parmesan recipe

* 2 garlic cloves diced

* 1/4 cup lemon juice freshly squeezed

* pinch of salt

Instructions

1. Add all ingredients to a blender, or food processor, and pulse until all ingredients are combined and a pesto consistency is reached.

2. Refrigerate until ready to use.

My adaption:

* 1/2 Cup chopped basil leaves

* 1 1/2 Cup chopped mixed herbs; thyme, sage, dill and oregano

* 1 tablespoon dry onion powder

* 1/2 squeezed lemon juice

* Pinch salt.

Directions

1. Add all ingredients to a blender, or food processor, and pulse until all ingredients are combined and a pesto consistency is reached. If too liquid, add more chopped herbs.

2. Freeze in small jars until ready to use.

Note: for flavor variety I change the amounts of each herb from season to season.



REAL LIFE WELLNESS

By Dr. Bill Hemmer

The Health Benefits of Being Social

As I have been talking to patients recently, being social keeps creeping into our conversation. Since the pandemic began, we have all been told to stay home, only be around others if it is necessary and be suspicious of anybody you don't live with.

While this might have been necessary, the effect isolation has on you is undeniable. We are social beings. We need intimate contact and interaction

with others to get and stay healthy. I believe it's time for us to look at getting back to living our social life again.

Here are a few reasons why this idea is important.

First, your Immune system only works and stays healthy when it has something to continuously work on. What I mean is you have bugs, viruses, bacteria and other critters all around you every day. If you stay home, your Im-

mune system doesn't have new or different invaders to create antibodies for because it has already created antibodies for all the things in your house already.

But, as soon as you leave your house and go somewhere else, there are new bugs, viruses, bacteria and critters that are different from those in your house. This activates your Immune system to create antibodies for those new things it has not encountered before. This is what your Immune system does to keep itself healthy.

The best example of this is somebody who hasn't left their house in a long time, then leaves to go somewhere, and ends up getting sick. Their Immune system wasn't strong

enough to mount an attack against any new bugs they encountered. This is truly a case of if you don't use your Immune response, you will lose it.

Another reason socialization is so important is the healing power of human interaction. Have you ever wondered why solitary confinement is considered such a terrible punishment? When you are by yourself for too long, your brain will literally start to make you think crazy thoughts and you could literally end up going crazy.

Think about the thoughts you have in the middle of the night when you can't sleep, and you have nobody to talk to? Your mind starts to go places that aren't healthy

or normal. If you have the same thoughts during your day and someone else is around, you can talk through it and you feel better and move on.

This is what makes isolation so terrible. Human interaction allows us to feed off each other in a positive way. There is a great sense of comfort when you can talk to someone else in person and watch and learn from their body language, tone of voice and can actually feel their presence. No Zoom meeting, Facetime or video chat can ever replace the connection that occurs when two or more people are in the same room together talking about their specific ideas.

Finally, every time you

meet and talk to another person, you transfer microscopic organisms between each other. This is exactly the way Nature intended it. This occurs through your breath, touch, skin shedding and close contact. This is one of the most important things for all of us to experience. Because micro doses of different invaders from others allow your Immune system to build antibodies for those invaders without you having enough of those invaders to make you sick. You get exposed, but on a small scale. Just enough to build immunity but not enough to cause illness.

I hope to see you soon!

Rotary District 6490 receives a \$25,000 Rotary Foundation Disaster Relief Grant to assist Gibson City residents with recent flood damage

On August 12, Gibson City and the surrounding area received 9-11 inches of rain in eight hours! Homes and businesses were extensively damaged

in the ensuing flooding. As requests for assistance went out, Rotary clubs and Rotarians in the 20-county district in East Central Illinois generously purchased

and delivered supplies and donated funds to the Gibson City Rotary Club. District Governor Heather Stoa submitted a Disaster Response Grant application to The Rotary International Foundation and was notified on September 3, that \$25,000 was awarded to the district to deliver additional relief to individuals and families impacted by the flood.

With more than 1.2 million members worldwide, Rotarians are on the ground and ready to take action to help communities recover when disasters strike. Rotary club members and The Rotary Foundation play a unique role in disaster recovery and rebuilding efforts. **Rotarians lead in every phase of a community's recovery through:**

ery through:

* Immediate response offering helping hands and supplies,

* Short-term assistance with funds and materials to re-establish day-to-day operations, and

* Long-term rebuilding where clubs plan and implement projects that restore affected communities.

The \$25,000 grant will cover replacement and installation of hot water heaters, furnaces, and small appliances such as stoves and refrigerators. Funds will also provide materials to repair walls and floors damaged by water. Aid agencies provided initial relief to the area, but the long-term recovery is now up to the citizens of the community. Many

residents lack insurance for replacement of belongings. The Rotary Foundation Disaster Relief Grant will help fill the void.

Rotary disaster response grants support relief and recovery efforts in areas that have been affected by natural disasters within the past six months. Funds for the grants are contributed by Rotarians and friends in more than 200 countries and territories around the world. Since 2019, The Rotary Foundation has approved over 350 disaster response grants totaling more than \$8 million for immediate relief and short-term assistance. District Governor Heather Stoa thanked those who are helping the Gibson City community and noted that Rotarians

are generous with their time, resources, and financial contributions. "While Rotarians in District 6490 are helping our neighbors in Gibson City, we are also reaching out to assist people in Haiti with the most recent earthquake and to those in Louisiana and along the eastern seaboard who are recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Ida."

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise. Rotary District 6490 has 46 clubs in east central Illinois with over 1700 members.

To learn more about District 6490, please visit: <https://www.rotarydistrict6490.org/>

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Sew Happy Hearts Quilt show to be in Neoga in September postponed due to the the pandemic

To all our quilters and friends, we regret that we have postponed our Quilt Show in Neoga on September 24 and 25. This decision was quite difficult but due to present COVID-19 condi-

tions and guidelines, we felt the safety of our membership and public attendees was the best decision to make at this point.

We will be announcing a future date and getting that

information to you as soon as we can.

Although the show has been postponed, there will still be a virtual raffle drawing for the quilt shown on our Facebook page on No-

vember 18. You may still purchase tickets. They are 3/\$5 or 8/\$10. You may contact Joelle at any time for these up to November 18 by emailing ehlenbeckjoelle@gmail.com.