

## May 6 Plant Sale and Festival, Janet Buck, Plant Sale Chair

It's almost here - the Nebraska Herbal Society's 21st Annual Plant and Bake Sale, Saturday, May 6! Plan to be at the New Hope Methodist Church at 45th and Orchard streets between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Helping hands will bring in plants, set up and price items on May 5. Members may bring plants, baked goods and gifts at 1 p.m. May 5. The plant sale is such a good time, a great way to buy herbs that might be hard to come by elsewhere. It's a good way to let the Lincoln community know about the Nebraska Herbal Society. Let's be good ambassadors!

Gary Fehr of Green School Farms is providing herbs and some vegetables for our sale. Online pre-order sales are available until April 24, in addition to May 6 in person purchases. Advance orders may be placed at <https://www.greenschoolfarms.com>. At online check-out, please note that you will need to choose the NHS Plant Sale as where you are ordering from, in order to help keep orders straight for Gary. See this demo video: <https://www.loom.com/share/c3245f7e3f64486b9471fd58d88bc0a8>

Members are encouraged to bring items to sell such as:

- perennials from your own gardens and house plants, as well as seeds and any vegetables, herbs or flowers started from seed. Please have all plants potted and labeled. Note: scented geraniums are most welcome!
- herbal baked goods. Please make small packages or containers of cookies, muffins, cakes, herbal mixtures, and any other herbal foods, to sell. Items from the Herbal Society cookbook are always well received. If you make a batch of something, consider holding aside a small amount for taste testing. Samples are always quite popular! Bonnie Bake is organizing the bake sale.
- gently used garden items, such as garden tools, flowerpots and garden décor.
- gift items such as body scrubs or herbal seasoning mixtures. In the past we have sold decorated flowerpots, teacups with herbs planted in them and herbal soaps. If planning to make herbal seasonings, herbal salts or rubs, or flavored sugars, **please** bring ahead of time make arrangements to get them to Janet Buck ([jsbuck@windstream.net](mailto:jsbuck@windstream.net), 402.540.7912) or Bonnie Bake (402.570.5297) as soon as possible. We need time to coordinate containers and labels.

Donations also may be brought to the April 22 NHS meeting; to the May 5 set-up; to Sara Zimbelman (402.540.4541), or me ahead of time. Our raffle includes three herb-themed baskets with themes of bees, herbal delights (lotions, bath salts, soaps, etc.) and culinary herbs.

This is NHS' main annual fundraiser. It is a wonderful way to get better acquainted with fellow NHS members. It's also very fun! Please consider volunteering some time to help us out. Thanks to everyone for your cooperation; this sale couldn't happen without everyone pitching in!



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# Pink Moon: NHS News

Early April's calendar noted a "Pink Moon." The unusual name first came to the public in the 1930s when the Maine Farmer's Almanac published the Native American names of the moon for each month.



Co-President  
Janet Lindsteadt



*Phlox subulata* (creeping phlox)  
Photo: Plants.ces.ncsu.edu

Although the color of the moon isn't pink, April's full moon corresponds with the early springtime blooms of an herbaceous wildflower, *Phlox subulata*—commonly called creeping phlox or moss phlox—also known as "moss pink."

Other names for this full moon are "Budding Moon of Plants and Shrubs" and the "Moon of the Red Grass Appearing" referencing the bloom of plant life. With our temperatures vacillating and lack of April showers, pink phlox was slow to bloom.

But my spring fever with nature is here and I know everything will be in full beauty soon connecting us with the elements of the natural world. I am anxious to see the tulips, daffodils and crocus blooming soon with the help of the supernatural delight of the "pink moon!"

*And then my heart with pleasure fills  
And dances with the daffodils.  
-William Wordsworth*

## Tech Tip



Can't find an email in your 'In Box' or 'Spam Folder'?  
In Gmail, check the 'All Mail' folder.  
Every email you have is in this folder.

## April 22, 2023 NHS Agenda

### 9:30-10am Social Tea Time

### 10-10:20AM Business Meeting

President: Janet Lindsteadt/Jill Kuhel  
Secretary: Pam Knott  
Treasurer: Rocky Bray  
Program: Amber Jones/Jenni Dougherty  
Newsletter: Cheryl Alberts Irwin  
Membership: Ann Lif/Kathy Dawes  
Plant Sale: Janet Buck  
Herb Garden at the Regional Center: Ann Lif/Janet Buck/Denise Wiemer

### 10:20-10:30 Herb of the Month

**Coriander:** Pam Cuttlers



### 10:30-10:50 The Magic of Herbs & Spices, Cooking Around the World:

Marilyne Phelps will add to the herb of the month presentation, "cilantro," and give information on "culantro" -- its cousin on steroids. She will demo what to do with culantro and make Sofrito, the mother sauce or base for all cooking in many Caribbean and Latin American countries. Sofrito is used to make a quintessential dish, very typical of the Islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

### 10:50-11:15 Program

Plant sale preparation

### 11:15-11:30 Herb 101

Companion Planting by Jill Kuhel

### 11:30-Noon Social Time

# Membership Corner – April, Co-chairs Ann Lif and Kathy Dawes

Greetings, Herby Friends!

We hope you are enjoying the start of the new springtime! Last month we had past and new members rejoin our newly formatted Nebraska Herbal Society meeting. We are working on room flow in our new meeting space. We want members to interact and engage more with the program presenters as we modify the table set up.



The herbal tea table presentation has improved with new and fresh herbal teas to taste. We hope you will try something new, such as hibiscus tea!

We have new nametags for all members. As we transition to the new nametags, please let membership know if you are missing a new nametag and one will be made for you. A lapel clip replaces the string lanyard nametag, the better to see it and greet you. Members are asked to arrive at the meeting at 9:30 a.m. for time to meet and greet, find your place, make a nice cup of tea and set up any food to share. Our goal is to start meetings promptly at 10 a.m.

If you have recipes to share, please send them to [neherbalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:neherbalsociety@gmail.com) Attention: Cheryl newsletter. Recipes will be included in a future newsletter.

## Lincoln Regional Center

The NHS helps to maintain the herb garden on the Lincoln Regional Center Campus. Last year, the heat and lack of watering took a toll. The garden was in too much shade, needed plant division and was overtaken by invasive herbs. Management agreed the herb garden could be relocated in a sunnier location. Janet Buck asked the membership, by vote, to redesign the memorial stone head to commemorate the passing of NHS members; it now is ready for placement.

Please thank Denise Weimer and Pam Wealand for Lincoln Regional Center garden planting and maintenance!



The regional center maintenance staff relocated and rebuilt the new herb garden. Folks, it is HUGE! **We need plant donations. Please contact us if you would like to share some herbs. Contact for North Lincoln: Janet Buck, [jsbuck@windstream.net](mailto:jsbuck@windstream.net). Contact for South Lincoln: Ann Lif, [annlnk2@gmail.com](mailto:annlnk2@gmail.com).**

We need herbs that are drought-tolerant and full sun. Please, no overly aggressive herbs, such as mint or chives. We would like perennials, but will accept annuals. The center overwintered sage, oregano, thyme and catmint. But if they do not survive, we will need to replace them. And, we have room for more!



Following are a few of our requests, including **10 stepping stones**. Please feel free to comment to one of us with suggestions. We need short and taller plants for the middle.

Sage	Oregano
Thyme	Catmint
Anise hyssop	Strawberries (everbearing)
Asters (dwarf)	Coneflowers
Rudbeckia	Butterfly milkweed
Sedum for groundcover	Marjoram Lavender Rosemary

## Welcome, new members!



Pam Wealand

Jessie Krikac

## Member Spotlight, Susan Hanlon

**Hobbies/passions:** Playing with plants; doing what comes along.

**How did you learn about NHS?** My mother Louise Damke was one of the half-dozen or so founders of the NHS. The group organized to take care of the Chet Ager Nature Center at Pioneer Park. I've been a member since the group's founding in 1977.

**What is your favorite herb?** It depends on what I'm doing at the time. Usually I have basil, chives, mint. I just enjoy plants. It's 'grow or go.' If plants don't grow, they go!

**Please tell us something you'd like us to know about you:** Prior to 1992, I bred doublemint. I was the NHS newsletter editor for 11 years, putting together and mailing a 22-page newsletter four times a year. I'd just as soon be in the background; I'm a background type. **Feel free to tell us about your significant other, children, grandchildren, pets.** I spent 31 years in the Coast Guard as a yeoman. A yeoman does anything anyone wants done. Among the places I've lived are San Diego, Miami, Washington DC, Connecticut. Lincoln is my hometown. My husband, John, also is a member of NHS.



## 2023 NHS Officers, Board Members

### Co-Presidents

Jill Kuhel  
Janet Lindsteadt

### Vice-Presidents

Amber Jones  
Jenni Dougherty

### Secretary

Pam Knott

### Treasurer

Rocky Bray

### Public Relations

Marilyne Phelps

### Newsletter

Cheryl Alberts Irwin

### Membership

Ann Lif  
Kathy Dawes

### Plant Sale

Janet Buck

### Contact:

[neherbalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:neherbalsociety@gmail.com)

*The purpose of NHS is to promote the culture, harvesting and uses of herbs, through a variety of activities to meet the interests of the membership.*

## March Minutes, by Pam Knott

The March NHS meeting commenced at 10 a.m. at Aldersgate Church. **Joan Leitner** brought ornamental kale from Lincoln greenhouses for any members wanting it. **Janet Buck** talked of the annual plant sale May 6th at New Hope United Methodist Church 1295 N 45th St (45th and Orchard streets) from 9-1. Members signed up for 9-11 and 11-1, with runners needed for presale orders. Three raffle baskets will have bee, culinary and garden themes. Donations welcome. Pre-sale orders on Green School Farms website must specify Plant Sale for pickup for NHS credit. **Bonnie Bake** described baked goods and herb mixes needed for the sale. **Rocky Bray**, treasurer, paid insurance and provided the balance, then approved. **Janet Buck** said by mid-April the herb garden at the Lincoln Regional Center will be moved near the administration building and closer to water. Correction from the last report: the memorial stone at the center was made at Speidell Monuments. **Jill Kuhel** presented herb of the month, genus rubus, or raspberries and blackberries. Her handout had great information. **Marilyn Phelps** introduced delicious Greek lemon potatoes, rice pilaf and spanikopita. It was a feast, thanks Marilyn! **Amber Jones** discussed garden tools and their maintenance, and distributed gifts from Earl May. A July 8 bonus meeting will be a tour and lunch at Curious Roots Herb Farm. **Diana Lear** demonstrated how to propagate scented geraniums, with members able to try it. She showed many different types of geraniums.



## Recipes

### Patates Lemonates (Greek Lemon Potatoes), Marilyne Phelps

2 ½ - 3 lbs potatoes (I used Russet)	1/4 -1/3 Cup fresh lemon juice (depends on your taste)
At least 6 big garlic cloves	1/4 - 1/2 tsp cumin powder(optional)
1 heaping T dried oregano	2-3 tsp salt
2 C chicken or vegetable stock	1 tsp pepper
1/2 C olive oil	
About 6 sprigs/stems of fresh thyme. NOT bunches, just individual stems)	

Preheat oven to 400 F.

Peel & cut potatoes into thick wedges. Place in cold water if measuring/preparing remaining ingredients.

Peel and mince the garlic cloves, set aside.

Select about 6 sprigs of thyme and wash, set aside.

Take potatoes out of the water and place in a 9 x 13 pan (make only one layer). If unable to fit all in one layer, put excess in a smaller pan.

In a bowl pour the 1/2 cup of olive oil and the lemon juice. Beat together to emulsify.

Add salt, pepper, minced garlic, oregano and cumin if using. Blend well.

Add chicken stock or vegetable broth and stir well.

Pour everything on top of the potatoes. Make sure that everything is well coated.

Scatter the sprigs of thyme in between the potatoes.

Place pan/pans in oven and lower oven temperature to 390F.

Bake for 20-25 minutes.

Take pans out of oven and turn potatoes over. Put back in the oven for another 20-25 minutes until the liquid is mostly absorbed and you are left with mainly oil (some juice is fine). At this point you can serve the potatoes with the reserved pan drippings drizzled on top.

If you want your potatoes a bit crispy: place the pan under the broiler for 2-3 minutes until a bit golden. Keep an eye on them so they don't burn.

When serving, drizzle potatoes with all the drippings.



### Tzatziki, Marilyne Phelps

2 C Greek yogurt (full fat)	1/2 -1 tsp salt to taste
1 English cucumber (remove seeds if too many), grated	Ground pepper to taste
1-4 garlic cloves, minced (I used 2)	1-3 tsp chopped dill or mint
	Oil olive for drizzling when you serve it

In a colander place grated cucumber, leave for 10-15 minutes.

In a bowl combine the minced garlic, salt, pepper and dill or mint.

Press cucumber in colander to release as much liquid as possible.

Add cucumber to other ingredients, mix very well.

Serve with drizzle of olive oil and pieces of warm pita bread.

**Note:** May also serve with vegetables (especially potatoes) and meats. (I eat it all by itself, minus the garlic).

## Simple Rice Pilaf, Marilynne Phelps

1/2 C or more vermicelli/fideos/bird's nest pasta                      3 garlic cloves, minced  
2 T salted butter or olive oil. (Butter is tastier)                      1 big lime, zested  
2-3 T extra virgin olive oil    1-2 tsp salt to taste  
2 C rice (I used Ben's long grain)    2 tsp pepper  
1/2 large sweet onion, chopped fine    2 bay leaves  
3 C warm chicken or vegetable broth with 1 T melted butter, combined  
1-2 tsp oregano (if fresh, use 1- 2 T chopped fresh oregano)  
About 5 individual stems/sprigs of fresh thyme (NOT bunches, just single stems)

### Directions:

In pan over low heat, melt 2 T butter. Add vermicelli, sauté until golden. Stir often and keep a close eye on this, it will burn very quickly. Spoon vermicelli (and butter) onto a small plate, set aside.

In the same pan set over medium heat, add 2-3 T olive oil until very warm. Add chopped onions, sauté until the onion begins to get a little golden around the edges. Add minced garlic, sauté for a few seconds until fragrant and incorporated. Add rice, sauté for 2-3 minutes, stirring, until rice has slightly changed color.

Add the warm stock with the 1 tablespoon butter, the fresh thyme, the bay leaves, the oregano, the salt, the pepper and stir. Place a lid over the pan, lower the fire to the lowest setting and cook for about 15 minutes or until most of the stock has been absorbed.

Uncover rice, add lime zest and vermicelli (with accumulated butter), stir very carefully with a fork. Put the lid back on and let it finish cooking until all the liquid is gone. Remove from heat, let rest for 10 minutes. Uncover and fluff with a fork.

**Note:** If rice is not as soft as you would like and the liquid in your pan has been absorbed, add a little more very warm stock by tablespoons, around the edges of the pan and a tablespoon in the middle but do not disturb the rice. Cover and let it finish cooking.

Before serving, remove thyme stems and bay leaves from rice.

## Special Saffron Pilaf, Marilynne Phelps

8-10 saffron threads (Or more to your taste)\*    2-3 T fresh dill, chopped  
2 tablespoons salted butter or olive oil (Butter will be more tasty)    3 big garlic cloves minced  
1/2 C or more vermicelli/ fideos/bird's nest pasta    2 C rice (I used Ben's long grain)  
1 T olive oil or butter    2 bay leaves  
1/2 - 3/4 cup of slivered almonds or pignolias    1-2 tsp pepper  
(pine nuts)    1 small lemon, zested  
2-3 T extra virgin olive oil    1 lime zested  
1/2 large sweet onion, finely chopped    1-2 tsp salt to taste  
2 large carrots, shredded  
4 individual stems/sprigs of fresh thyme (NOT 4 bunches, just single stems)  
3 C warm chicken or vegetable broth, with 1 T melted butter  
1/3 C sultanas or regular raisins OR 2/3 cup of cranberries  
1/3 C dried cranberries OR 2/3 cup of raisins)



\* If you don't want to buy saffron, substitute turmeric. Just sprinkle some over rice after you add the broth. Add only enough to make the rice change its color to light yellow.

**Directions:**

Put the strands of saffron in a very small bowl and add about 3 tablespoons of warm water. Let it "bloom."



In a pan set over low heat, melt the 2 T butter. Add vermicelli and sauté until golden. Stir often and keep a close eye on this, it will burn very quickly. Spoon vermicelli (and butter) onto a small plate, set aside.

In the same pan over low heat, melt 1 T butter or olive oil, add almonds or pine nuts and sauté until slightly golden. Be careful, they will burn very quickly. Spoon almonds or pine nuts (and butter or oil) onto a small plate, set aside.

In same pan set over medium heat, add the 2 or 3 T olive oil until very warm. Add chopped onions, sauté until onion begins to get a little golden around the edges. Add minced garlic, sauté for a few seconds until it is fragrant and incorporated. Add shredded carrots, stir for a few seconds until incorporated. Add dill. Add the rice and sauté for 2-4 minutes, stirring often, until rice has slightly changed color.

Add the warm stock with the 1 T butter, saffron liquid and threads, bay leaves, fresh thyme, salt, pepper. Stir. Place lid over the pan, lower heat to lowest setting. Cook for about 15 minutes or until most (but not all) of the stock has been absorbed.

Uncover rice, add lemon and lime zest, vermicelli with accumulated butter, sultanas or raisins and/or cranberries. Stir very carefully with fork. Put lid back on, finish cooking until all liquid is gone and rice is soft. Remove from heat, let rest for 10 minutes, undisturbed. Uncover, add the almonds or pine nuts with the accumulated butter or oil, fluff with a fork.

**Note:** If rice is not as soft as you would like and the liquid in your pan has been absorbed, add a little more very warm stock by tablespoons, around the edges of the pan and a tablespoon in the middle but do not disturb the rice. Cover and let it finish cooking.

Before serving, remove thyme stems and bay leaves from rice.

## Spanokopita, Marilyne Phelps

1 box of frozen phyllo/filo pastry dough  
(contains 2 rolls-I used only 1 roll)

1-2 sticks of butter, melted  
(use second only if needed)

1 pound fresh spinach leaves

2 tsp dried dill or 2-3 T fresh dill, finely chopped

1/4-1/3 C chopped parsley

6-8 scallions finely chopped, both green and white parts

1 container ricotta cheese (usually about 15 oz)

1 lb or less feta cheese, finely crumbled

1/2 block of cream cheese, softened

3 T olive oil

½ tsp salt (feta is salty)

1-2 tsp freshly cracked black pepper

Note: Many add 2 eggs to the filling but I do not. Feel free to add them when mixing filling.

Note: The night before you expect to prepare the Spanakopita, remove phyllo from the freezer and thaw in refrigerator. Next day before preparing the filling, take the phyllo out of the frig and thaw on counter.

### Instructions

Preheat oven to 400°F



Spanakopita  
Photo: Amalocal.com.au

**The filling:**

Wash fresh spinach and put in a big colander to drain.

In wide pan heat 2 T olive oil and sauté spinach leaves in batches. As soon as the first batch wilts add more spinach leaves until all of them can fit in the pan.

When everything is totally wilted put back in the colander and allow to cool enough to handle. Take handfuls of the wilted spinach and squeeze out as much of the liquid as you can. Set aside or leave in colander.

In the same pan where you wilted the spinach, add remaining olive oil and sauté the onions for about 3 minutes. Add parsley and dill, sauté for another minute. Put spinach back in pan, mix well with onions and herbs. Add salt and pepper, making sure it is all well combined.

Take the pan off the heat and add the feta, ricotta and cream cheeses. Mix very, very well.

**Assemble the pie** (having the following ready to make it easier to assemble)

- the phyllo/filo pastry dough (there are 2 rolls, only take out 1, open and place phyllo sheets flat on a surface; cover with a damp kitchen towel. Refrigerate the 2nd roll.)

- a 9 X 13 baking pan, slightly buttered

- melted butter and pastry brush

- the filling

Take one sheet of phyllo at a time, place it in the pan and butter it. Do this with 10 sheets total.

Spread filling on top of the 10th sheet and even it out with a spatula.

Take another sheet of phyllo, place on top of the filling and butter it. Do this with 10 sheets total.

Make sure the last sheet is well buttered , especially all the edges.

With a very sharp knife, score the pie carefully into equal servings before baking. It is more difficult to cut after it is baked.

Bake in the oven (center rack) for 45-50 minutes or until golden all over. Let rest for 15 minutes before serving. Keep an eye on it so it won't burn.

## Come join us ....

To join the Nebraska Herbal Society, send your name, address, phone number and email address to: Nebraska Herbal Society, PO Box 4493, Lincoln, NE 68504-0493. Single Membership is \$10/year, family memberships are \$15/year. Checks are payable to Nebraska Herbal Society. The NHS newsletter strives for publication monthly. Articles received after the deadline, typically the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month, will appear in a later issue. Everyone is welcome to send articles and information to [neherbalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:neherbalsociety@gmail.com) Attention Cheryl. Please do not format articles or recipes.

*Disclaimer Information in this newsletter is intended for educational purposes only and should not be considered as a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment. Please consult with a healthcare provider before pursuing any herbal treatments.*



## 2023 NHS Meeting Dates, Programs

January 28	Soups/Sides
February 25	Herbal Love Charms, Spells, Potions
March 25	All about garden tools
<b>April 22</b>	Plant sale projects & program
<b>May 6</b>	Annual plant sale
June 24	Garden tour & project
July 8	Curious Roots herbal farm tour
July 22	No-till gardening
August 26	Garden tour
September 23	Herbal sleep remedies
October 28	Member demonstrations
November 18	Holiday ornament project/table décor
December 2	Holiday Luncheon

Meetings at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 8320 South St, Lincoln, NE, unless otherwise noted.

Tea is served before and during meetings. Bring your own tea mug!  
Members are invited to bring light snacks to share.

## March Photos

*Lower left: Marilyne Phelps shows how lemon and parsley are commonly used in Greek cooking.*

*Lower right: Amber Jones describes how to keep garden tools sharp and clean for longevity.*

*Far left: Rocky Bray sends greetings from the US Botanical Gardens in Washington, DC, in early April*

*Far right: Diana Lear demonstrates how to propagate scented geraniums.*

