



Mabel Johnson keeps the art of growing herbs alive.

Herb society

Group studies special teas

by JAN COOLEY
for The Post

Secret formulas in Boring? You bet.

Not for special weapons or miracle drugs, but for tea. The Boring Herb Society, organized in January 1983, is studying herb teas. Members concoct their own blends from home-grown herbs, then share them with other members at meetings.

While they are willing to say what ingredients they have used — a must because of possible allergic reactions — they don't divulge the formula of the blends.

"You never give your formula," says Mabel Johnson, a Boring resident who founded the society. "Fortunes can be made from formulas."

Johnson, who has studied herbs for 30 years, became interested in herb teas because of her allergies to regular tea. Her specialty is a five-mint tea that uses spearmint, peppermint, curly mint, orange mint and woolly mint.

"I cannot keep up with the demand for my mint teas," she says proudly.

The herb society has blossomed under Johnson's nurturing eye. The society is open to everyone and has many visitors. But the groups' core is made up of six "dynamos," says Johnson. "You can't believe what those people do."

In addition to teas, the members grow herbs to use in cooking, crafts and sachets. They also are engaged in a search for what Johnson calls herbs in their "true form."

"We are in the throes of finding original, pure plants — those that have not been crossed," says Johnson.

They are difficult to find. Most plants sold at commercial outlets are hybrids, laments Johnson, who refuses to grow "willy-nilly herbs."

Hybrid mints, for example, may have a wonderful fragrance, she says. But they will have "the most atrocious flavor in the world. It's just an ugly flavor."

"The most terrible plants are being sold in the commercial nurseries and by (other) herb societies," she says. "There are not enough of us old-timers who know the true form."

Often pure plants can be obtained only from a root or cutting from older herb gardens. Society members have learned ("to their sorrow," says Johnson) not to trust seeds. She refers to very old books to identify whether an herb is true. One was written in the 1500s, another in the 1600s.

"All I ever had were those old, old masters," says Johnson. Newer

books may be colorful and artistic, but often they are "inaccurate as the dickens."

Wonderful herbs can be grown by "sensible gardening," advises Johnson. Do not use manures, but chemical fertilizers, which are much kinder to herbs. Even those are not necessary if the soil is good enough.

She recommends growers experiment with partial shade or full sun "to get the flavor you're after."

Johnson also has tips for harvesting the plants.

"The rule for centuries, I would say, is you harvest them on a sunny

day, in the morning after the sun has evaporated the dew."

Allow the leaves to dry completely. If any moisture is left, mold will form on the leaves. Then strip them from the stems and store them in jars set in a cool, dark cupboard. Basements often are too damp to be good storage places.

"To retain the flavor, you do not pulverize (the leaves) until you need them," says Johnson.

The Boring Herb Society meets from 10 a.m. until noon on the second Monday of each month at the Boring Fire Hall on Highway 212. Visitors are welcome.

Officials discuss measure 2

Clackamas County Commissioners and the mayors and managers of cities in the county — including Tom Reber, Sandy city manager — will meet at 2 p.m. Friday, Sept. 14 to discuss the 1½ property tax limitation, urban services and the idea of a multipurpose convention or sports facility.

The meeting will be held at the Department of Environmental Services, 902 Abernethy Road, Oregon City, and is another in the regular informal discussions among these officials, according to Board of County Commissioners Chairman Robert Schumacher.

"By talking together about local

government concerns, we've found a number of opportunities for joint efforts and mutual assistance. Discussions are very positive," Schumacher said.

Recent release of the Attorney General's opinion on the impact of the property tax limitation ballot measure prompts that discussion. County Commissioner Dale Harlan and Lake Oswego City Manager Peter Harvey have both suggested that local government should begin preparing now for possible passage of Ballot Measure 2. At the June 15 commissioners, mayors, and managers meeting, Harvey sug-

gested that new accounting and budgeting procedures will probably be needed.

Discussion of the quality and cost of urban services in cities and unincorporated areas also is a follow-up of the previous meeting.

In June Sheldon Edner, assistant director of Portland State University's Center for Urban Studies, presented to officials a discussion of the urban services study he conducted for Washington County, and explained the potential value of a similar study for the Clackamas County jurisdiction. The study would be a detailed analysis by service area of the difference between revenues generated and expenditures or benefits received by cities, urban unincorporated areas and rural areas, according to Edner. Cost would be \$45,000.

At the Sept. 14 meeting, officials are expected to decide whether or not to pursue the Portland State University proposal.

The multipurpose convention or sports facility idea will be presented by two members of the county's Economic Development Commission. At its August meeting, the EDC decided to explore public feelings for such a facility. Their decision was a response to several groups in the county who are promoting the idea.

25 working stand-up comedians.

Franklin is a 1958 Boring Elementary School graduate, and said his old friends will recognize him by the name Dennis Franklin Scott. He has worked for KRDR and KGON radio stations.

The comedy showroom at Puff's Pub holds about 100 people. There will be a \$3 cover charge per person.

Boring man organizes tavern comedy acts

Stand-up comedians are back, says a comedy promoter, and they will appear in a comedy show at Puff's Pub, 22200 SE Stark Street in Gresham, at 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 14 and 15.

Dennis Franklin, a partner in Strictly Comedy Productions, says the headliner for the first show will be Michael "Boats" Johnson, who won this year's Portland Comedy competition.

"We plan on having about three acts each night with surprise guests from time to time," said Franklin, who added the Portland area now has

Food goes to low-income Sandy people

A commodity distribution for low income people is set for Saturday, Sept. 22 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Sandy Community Action Center.

Cheese, butter and honey will be given away. People are advised to bring a sack or box to take the commodities home in.

A new ruling combines income and number of people in a household (not family), said Maggie Spannaus, a member of the Action Center's board of directors and coordinator for commodities distribution.

Procedural rules caused some delays the last time commodities were given out.

Elderly people will not be forced to stand in line, she added.

People who know shut-ins or disabled people should contact Pat at the Sandy Community Senior Center, 668-5569, to make sure they get their commodities.

People with questions on eligibility may call the Action Center at 668-4746.

Boundaries for the Sandy Community Action Center include 242nd Street in Boring, Cherryville Lane to the east (except for senior citizens), the Sandy Elementary School District line to the south, and the Multnomah County line to the north.

Bridge work will cause slowdowns

Construction crews will resurface the Salmon River Bridge on U.S. Highway 26 during the week of Sept. 17, weather permitting.

Motorists may experience delays as traffic will be restricted to one lane during the day while crews are working.

During night-time hours all four lanes on the bridge will be open but the surface will be rough.

The existing surface will be removed and the deck of the bridge will be coated with a waterproofing material and paved with asphaltic concrete. Estimated completion time is one week.

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