Biographies for Speakers at Spring Herb Symposium 2020

Susan Belsinger lectures, teaches and writes about gardening and cooking. She is a food writer, editor and photographer who has authored and edited over 25 books and hundreds of articles. Recently referred to as a “flavor artist,” Susan delights in kitchen alchemy—the blending of harmonious foods, herbs and spices—to create real, delicious food, as well as libations, that nourish our bodies and spirits and titillate our senses.

Susan has been blogging regularly for Taunton Press, www.vegetablegardener.com, for the past eight years. Susan’s latest publication, Grow Your Own Herbs: The 40 Best Culinary Varieties for Home Gardens, co-authored with Arthur O. Tucker was released in June 2019 by Timber Press. Her website is www.susanbelsinger.com

Susan in her two talks will discuss Rubus, Herb of the Year 2020 and Combining Herbs & Spices to Create Your Own Blend. She will present simple and well-known blends like poultry stuffing blend to the exotic blend of Za’atar. You will walk away knowing how to make a blend and on what foods to use it. One of Susan’s favorite blends is Togarashi—can’t wait to hear how to make and use it!

Susan Betz has been actively involved in growing and using herbs to educate the public about gardening and the natural world for over 35 years. She is an Honorary Master Gardener, a member of the International Herb Association, Garden Communicators, and the Ecological Landscape Alliance. Susan is a life member of the Herb Society of America and received the Helen D. Conway Little Medal of Honor in 2018. She is a charter member of HSA’s Native Herb Conservation committee, the Society’s sustainable garden initiative. Susan currently serves on HSA’s Notable Native Herb program and is a contributing author to HSA’s native herb fact sheets published annually. She is the author of Magical Moons & Seasonal Circles; Stepping into the Circle of the Seasons and Neighboring with Nature/Native Herbs for Pleasure and Purpose.

Susan’s presentation, Magical Moons & Seasonal Cycles: Garden Phenology, will include information on propagating herbs, an element of phenology. Phenology is the study of the timing of natural periodic events in the plant and animal world influenced by the local environment, especially weather, temperature, seasonal cycles, and climate. Plant and animal life cycles are predictors of reoccurring events in nature. Drawing from her decades of gardening experience, Susan will discuss how to use “nature’s calendar.” Susan’s website if www.freshstartherherbs.org
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Bill (aka The Mad Botanist) was born and raised in south central Illinois and is a professionally trained botanist. He is comfortable dealing with flowering plants and cryptogams (i.e., fungi, lichens, ferns and particularly bryophytes) as well as ornamental and food plant problems and understands Midwestern growing conditions, both in natural and human influenced environs. Bill lives at and gardens a three-acre property on the northeast side of Indianapolis with his buddy Ernie and four spoiled felines. On Saturdays during the growing season he hangs out at Soules Garden in Greenwood.

Bill was a curator for 10 years (Illinois Natural History Survey and Indiana State Museum) and taught high school biology for 15 years. For over three decades, he has directed the special publications program for the Indiana Academy of Science (IAS), supervising the production and marketing of numerous books (e.g., Orchids of Indiana, The Sunflower Family in the Upper Midwest and the monumental award-winning Flora of the Chicago Region). He recently (2016) wrote and self-published Rantings of a Mad Botanist, a 450-page 106-chapter book intended to help gardeners and property managers make fewer mistakes and avoid problems. His book emphasizes central Indiana native and invasive species as well as other land use practices. His associated website themadbotanist.com includes a relevant, useful and sometimes provocative “Rant of the Month.”

Fragrance is a prime consideration Bill uses in deciding whether or not to include a plant in his landscape. He will be sharing info on the best fragrant species for the Midwest garden.

Christine Bhe, Tai Chi and Qigong Instructor

Christine is a Certified Tai Chi Instructor with the Tai Chi for Health Institute. She began her path to health and wellbeing with Sun style Tai Chi classes in 2012 and has been a certified instructor since March 2016. Christine’s Tai Chi for Health classes are based on Dr. Lam’s Tai Chi program. For more information go to http://taichiforhealthinstitute.org/

Christine is a Certified Taijifit Flow and Taijifit for Veterans Instructor with Taijifit International. Christine's Taijifit classes enhanced Qi and create a state of Flow through continuous fluid Tai Chi movements. For more information go to https://www.taijifit.net/about. Christine is certified to teach Shibashi Qigong by Master Wing Cheung of the Tai Chi, Qigong & Feng Shui Institute. For more information go to https://taichi18.com/

Also, Christine is certified to teach Baduanjin (8 Brocades) Qigong by Master Zhichao Ling of Ling’s Oriental Martial Arts. For more information go to https://lingtaiji.com/
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