

She grows own herbs for her use in cooking

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"The nice thing about the mull is that the spices can be washed, dried and reused as many as three or four times," Wells added. After that they can be ground in a coffee mill, used with a little fresh spice in apple or

pumpkin pie, spice cookies or steamed pudding.
One last use for depleted elder mull is to remove stale or unpleasant cooking odors from the home. Put the mull in a pan with water and simmer awhile.
"It gives the house a wonderful smell," Wells said.

Give English tea party for elegant afternoon

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"Look to the literature of the period — Charles Dickens, Kate Greenaway illustrations, Beatrix Potter's books," McNaul advised. "The Victorians were as fond of whimsy as they were of sweets."

For an informal tea with a country look and feel, try the books of Beatrix Potter. "If you don't want to have a 'Peter Rabbit' party, call it the 'Herbs of Beatrix Potter,'" McNaul added.

Use table linens with a small, flower print, pictured "Peter Rabbit" children's dishes and cottage or stoneware. McNaul had a round, teapot shaped like an English cottage on her display table to illustrate.

"Your menu could include 'Quietly Chamomile Tea,' 'Ginger and Pickle Sandwiches' and 'Mr. MacGregor's Dip,' spread on butterfly-shaped crackers," McNaul said.

AT THE OPPOSITE end of the scale was a formal tea with a Rus-

sian theme.
"I chose that because my whole color scheme was based on Pavlova perfume (named for the Russian ballerina), rather than Russian herbs," McNaul explained.

Colors were pink, black and cream. McNaul used rose-colored china (the perfume is heavily rose-scented) pink silk roses in a black lacquer vase and rose popovers laced with Pavlova. Foods helped to carry out the color scheme as well as the theme: smoked salmon sandwich spread on dark bread and Royal Tea Cake — a bundt cake flavored with one cup of Red Zinger herb tea and, of course, to drink, Russian Caravan tea by Wagner.

McNaul gave several recipes from her cookbook "High Tea and Social Times," including one for flavored mayonnaise: Mix 1/2 cup flavored jelly to 1 cup mayonnaise, to use on fruit for traditional chicken salad sandwiches.

In planning a theme tea, McNaul concluded, the hostess need be limited only by her own virtuosity.

Memories of Mama's hot soups

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CREAM OF CHICKEN SOUP
make about 2 quarts
1 quart chicken stock
pinch each of sage and thyme
1/2 tsp. crushed peppercorns
1 tsp. salt (optional)
1/2 cup celery, chopped
1 cup peas (fresh or frozen)
2 carrots, diced
1 cup chicken stock
4 tsp. flour
1/2 cup powdered milk
2 cups cooked, diced chicken

In a pot, add the stock, sage, thyme and peppercorns. Bring to a boil. Add celery, peas, carrots and cook for eight minutes. Combine 1

cup of chicken stock with milk and flour. Shake or mix well. Add to soup, cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in chicken chunks, garnish with nutmeg or paprika and serve.

POTATO SOUP
(makes about 1 1/2 quarts)
1 1/2 cups leek or green onions, chopped
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1 large clove garlic, minced
1 carrot, minced fine
4 tsp. butter
4 cups chicken stock
2 cups diced potatoes
1/2 cup cream
Salt and white pepper to taste
This can be made with 4 cups sliced

mushrooms for a great cream of mushroom soup.
Sauté leeks, onions and garlic and carrot in butter until tender. Do not brown. Add stock and potatoes, cover and bring to a boil and simmer until potatoes are tender. Puree in a blender or processor until smooth. Whisk in a little hot soup to the cream and then add the pot. Correct seasonings. If too thick, thin with more stock. As an optional treat, just before serving, stir in 1/2 cup dry Vermouth or sprinkle with caraway seeds.

CAN'T MISS CHILI
makes enough for 4 hearty appetites
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup onions, chopped
1/2 cup green pepper, chopped

2 small cloves garlic, minced
2 cups cooked or canned kidney beans
1 lb. ground beef or ground turkey
1-3 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. cumin
1 cup beef stock, tomato puree or liquid from beans
2 tsp. salt (optional)
1/2 tsp. oregano, crushed
1 hot chili pepper, pierced with a toothpick
In a large saucepan, heat oil and add onions, green pepper and garlic and saute until lightly soft. Add ground beef or ground turkey, cook throughout, breaking up meat while stirring. Add remaining ingredients, lower heat to a simmer and simmer for 30 minutes. Discard dried chili before serving.

cooking calendar

● **KITCHEN GIFTS**
A class in "Gifts from the Kitchen" is being offered by the West Bloomfield Community Education Department. Students will learn to make and attractively package many special treats. The class will

be held from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12, at the West Bloomfield Community Education Center (Early Elementary). Registration is being taken at the center, 5475 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield 48322, or by mail. The fee is \$4. For more information call 851-7600.

Food for picky eaters

AP — Few things are as frustrating to a parent as a picky eater. Here are some ways to help your children eat more healthful meals.
● Make eating a family affair. Encourage friendly conversation at the dinner table, not battles.
● Forcing your children to eat gets you nowhere. When your kids

refuse to eat at mealtime, tell them there will be no snacks later and stick to your word.
● Keep new foods simple and serve only one or two bites the first time they try it.
● Set a good example for your kids. Don't expect them to eat spinach if you don't.

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Lois Thieleke

For centuries herbs have fascinated gardeners and cooks. Herbs have been used to season foods, as fragrances for linens and clothing, medical cure-alls, fabric dye, love potions and witches' brew. Besides these uses, herbs are decorative as borders, to form small hedges or as a carpet for the garden. Whether you are a cook or gardener or both, herbs are enjoyable.

In cooking, herbs are an accessory, and like all accessories they should be chosen with care and used with discretion so they accent and not overwhelm. It's better to be a little overcautious rather than reckless with herbs, especially if they are new to you. Dried herbs are stronger than fresh, and powdered herbs are stronger than crumbled. A useful formula is: 1/4 teaspoon powdered herbs equals 1/2 to 1 teaspoon crumbled equals 2 teaspoons fresh.

Many people prefer to grow their own herbs in a summer garden and then on a windowsill so the herbs are available fresh year-round.
Herbs may be harvested at any stage of growth, but flavor is the strongest when the oils are at their peak. Harvesting should be done in the morning, after the dew has evaporated and before the sun is very bright. Scissors are often the best utensil for cutting fresh herbs.

DRIED HERBS should be stored away from direct sunlight to prevent bleaching. Most of them keep their flavors about one year. If properly dried and stored, Chives, parsley, French tarragon, mint, basil, lovage and sorrel keep well in the freezer. Just put them into individual freezer bags or jars and freeze.

Herbs can provide a creative, tasteful alternative to salt for flavoring foods. Beware of purchased herbal salt blends. They are herbs with salt added. Read the ingredients carefully or blend your own combination. The following is a tasty herb blend: 2 teaspoons each of thyme leaves, ground savory and basil leaves, plus 1 teaspoon sage and 1 tablespoon marjoram leaves. Mix them together and grind in a blend. Great for salads, "salt shaker" or cooking foods.

Herb vinegars are easy to make. They add interesting flavors to dishes and are great fun gifts. Use either wine or apple cider vinegar, add your favorite herbs and let stand in a warm dark place for at least one month. When they are ready, strain and rebottle them. Add a fresh sprig of the herb to each bottle for aesthetic effect. Tarragon and basil are the most popular for herb vinegars.

Herb jellies are delicious on breads, muffins, pancakes and scones and served with roast meats. Some choices are basil, opal purple or lemon basil, mint, sage, thyme, rose-scented geraniums and rosemary. A crapple or apple juice used with herbs makes a lovely-looking-and-tasting product.

Herb honey is a delight to use on hot biscuits, scones, toast or as a sweetener for tea. Bruise the herbs of your choice, slightly and place a layer of the herb in a saucepan. Cover with honey and warm slowly over low heat for several minutes. Pour into jars and allow to stand in a warm place for three weeks. To remove herb leaves.

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