

WJR Garden Show host to speak at Homer's Herb Workshop

Three speakers and a taste-tempting gourmet menu highlight the 19th annual Homer Historical Society Herb Workshop. The event will be in Homer on Saturday, February 12 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Homer Methodist Church, 101 East Adams Street.

WJR radio station's Gardening Show horticulturist Dr. Dean Krauskopf will provide tips to help the newest or most advanced gardener. Krauskopf has been a Michigan State University staff member for over 25 years, teaching in the Horticulture Department. He is also the integrated crop management agent for Southeast Michigan's MSU Extension Service. For more than eight years, Krauskopf has hosted the Detroit station's one-hour radio show filled with helpful information and answers to questions about gardens, lawn care, garden pests, tree problems, and related topics.

The two other speakers will be Bruce and Pamela MacDonald and Gary Siegrist. The Macdonalds own and operate Old MacDonald's Farm in Marshall. Their topic will be "How to Grow Apple Trees in Your Backyard." Siegrist is the naturalist on the staff of the Dahlem Environmental Education Center in Jackson. He will talk about "the dirty dozen non-invasive plants" and how to put natural plants back into home landscaping.

The workshop will also have craft booths, a silent auction, and a variety of herbs used in the gourmet menu from the opening continental breakfast with homemade breakfast breads and herb teas to the mid-morning snack and the taste-tempting lunch.

The mid-morning snack will include a layered taco dip with chips, a cheese dip and veggie sticks.

Braised beef short ribs with a guava barbecue sauce highlight the luncheon menu. Fine beef short ribs have been appearing on many gourmet menus recently, prompting the Herb Workshop's committee to select them. This is the first time in the event's 19-year history that a beef dish has been featured. The lunch will also include bow tie pasta with garlic butter, sunny asparagus spears with Hollandaise sauce and a mixed green salad with autumn apple cider vinaigrette and gingerbread croutons.

Key lime cupcakes and assorted others will be served for dessert, noting the current popularity of cupcakes in all settings.

Recipes for all the featured dishes are included in a workshop booklet given to participants.

The Herb Workshop began 19 years ago as a mid-winter break for participants and a fund raiser for a variety of Homer Historical Society projects which currently include restoration of the former Albion Town Hall that was moved to Blair Historical Farm in 2006, the rural Grover railroad depot moved there in 2009, and other Blair Farm restoration work.

Reservations are a must. They may be made by calling 517-524-7348 or 517-568-3278 and by sending a check for the \$30 per person donation payable to the Homer Historical Society and mailed to the organization at 9700 VanWert Road, Homer 49245.

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