
MWSHS Student Newsletter

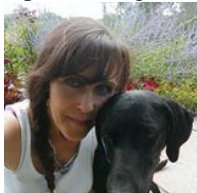
Spring 2016

MWSHS Alumni—Ambassadors of Herbal Healing & Education!

In this issue of the *MWSHS Student Newsletter*, we continue our updates on some of the many fine graduates of our Master-Herbalist Diploma Program, whereby the student reader can see the strides that they each have made in implementing their acquired herbal knowledge to teach, to write, and to heal. We hope that current students find these updates both educational and inspirational, as have all of us here at MWSHS....

Our update for this issue is for ***Tracey Kamm, M.H.***, a 2014 graduate of our Master-Herbalist Diploma Program.

**Register Now for the
MWSHS Workshop
on Sunday, April 3rd, 2016**
See Page Two for More Information.



"I became a student with MWSHS because I wanted to be in charge of my own wellness and that of my family," Tracey tells us. "I'd already been on quite a journey, working on some serious health challenges myself and with one of my sons, and I had long before turned to the world of natural wellness. As I saw how we both were improving, I began studying and learning everything I could: I first became a Certified Reflexologist through the American Reflexology Certification Board. I had already learned so much in the field of nutrition and herbs, but I wanted to learn it right and learn it well and to be able to apply it effectively for me and for my family in any situation. As a mom, I was very determined to find answers for my son. So I searched for a school to study with, and when I saw the program at MWSHS, I knew that it would work perfectly for me with its distance learning, flexibility, helpful staff, and reasonable pricing."

As to the benefits of studying with MWSHS, Tracey writes: "The flexibility of being able to work at my own pace and at my own time was a perfect match for me as a mom. I also really appreciate the large amounts of printed materials in binders--I still reference those all the time! And the fact that I could do all the workshop hours locally with classes and people in my area worked great, too."

Motivation can sometimes be a problem in starting a new study program, but Tracey notes here: "Because I love herbalism so much, and since this was such an enjoyable course, it was not difficult at all for me to stay motivated. (*"MWSHS Alumni," continued on p. 4.*)

Mid-to-Late 2015 MWSHS Graduates

We offer our congratulations to the following recent graduates of the Western-Herbalism Certificate Program:

Miriam King, C.H. (MWSHS)

Timothy England, C.H. (MWSHS)

Joseph Finkelstein, C.H. (MWSHS)

We also offer our congratulations to the following recent graduates of the Asian and Integrative modules of the M.H. program.

Sherry Liabraaten, C.H. (MWSHS)

MWSHS Workshops: Forums for Hands-on Experience

Attendees of MWSHS' workshops have been abuzz with appreciation for the many lectures, demos, and practice sessions, such as: "It was so interesting—great for someone like me who loves learning," and: "Very informative and gears me to push myself to get through the program faster and to make changes to my lifestyle."

Have you, dear student, found opportunity to attend an MWSHS workshop yourself as yet? If not, why not take the opportunity to register for the next available workshop? See page 2 for upcoming MWSHS-sponsored workshops.

New Book by MWSHS Director M. Alf
(See Page Three for Details & an Interview!)

Student Message Board: A Real Resource!

Have you taken advantage, dear student, of the opportunity to post a thought on our new message board? Many students have already done so, relating herbal experiences, asking about others' experiences with particular situations, etc. So far, in fact, the board has had thousands of visitors, most of whom have viewed most of the messages that have been posted.

Why not, then, take *your* turn to post a thought? Undoubtedly, both your fellow students and persons interested in MWSHS who are visiting our site would welcome reading your thoughts! Here, then, is how to post your thought: When logged on to our website (www.midwesterherbalstudies.com), simply click on "Message Board" on the menu to the left.

WORKSHOP CREDIT OPTIONS

Except where noted, all of the below-listed events qualify as Workshop (Module 5) credits toward the Master-Herbalist program. Each hour of *verified* attendance (such as via instructor-completed workshop-credit slips supplied by MWSHS) counts toward an equivalent hour of Workshop Category #3 credits (up to the student limit of 20 hours), unless another category is specified or unless one attends a particular workshop at one of these events that is *strictly* in one of these other categories. ***MWSHS-sponsored workshops are boxed.***

Workshops, Conferences, Lectures, & Events in Herbal Studies Across North America

Apr. 3rd, 2016. "MWSHS' Holistic-Assessment Workshop for 2016," **New Brighton, MN.** \$40 if registered by March 26th, \$45 thereafter. Go to www.midwestherbalstudies.com for a registration form or call the School at 651-484-0487.

April 8th-10th, 2016 "Southwest Conference on Botanical Medicine," **Tempe, AZ.** Field Studies with Phyllis Hogan and JoAnn Sanchez. Herbal experts also include Paul Bergner, Mary Bove, Tori Hudson, Mimi Kamp, Rhonda PallasDowney, Marianne Marchese, Jason Miller, Kenneth Proefrock, Katie Stage, Jill Stansbury, David Winston. CE credits. Early bird registration March 2. For more info or to register, call (541) 482-3016 or visit the website at www.botanicalmedicine.org.

May 22nd, 2016. "MWSHS' Wildcrafting & Medicine-making Workshop for 2016," **New Brighton, MN.** \$35 if registered by May 14th, \$45 thereafter. Go to www.midwestherbalstudies.com for a registration form or call the School at 651-484-0487.

June 3rd-6th, 2016 "Medicines from the Earth Herb Symposium," **Black Mountain, NC.** *Ethnobotanical Field Study* with David Winston (qualifies for Workshop category #2: Wild-plant walks). Herbal experts also include Mary Bove, Chanchal Cabrera, Christopher Hobbs, Kenneth Proefrock, Jill Stansbury, Roy Upton, and Marc Williams. Early bird registration April 14. For more info or to register, call (541) 482-3016 or visit the website at www.botanicalmedicine.org.

June 12th, 2016. "MWSHS' 1st Wild-plant Walk for 2016," **Arden Hills, MN.** \$25 if registered by April 2nd, \$30 thereafter. Go to www.midwestherbalstudies.com for a registration form or call the School at 651-484-0487.

Sept. 16th-18th, 2016. "Nature Wonder Wild Weekend," North Bend State Park, **Harrisville, WV.** Enjoy a full weekend of hikes (which qualify for Workshop Category #2 "Wild Plant Walks"), programs, and a wild foods banquet. For more info or to register, visit the website <http://www.northbendsp.com/Special/special.html>. or call (304) 558-2754.

"Where Do I Find Qualifying Workshops in My Local Area?"

Aside from the *MWSHS Student Newsletter*, you can check holistic newspapers that are available in many larger cities. In all areas, you might check local, independently-owned health food stores and food co-ops, which may have bulletin boards or knowledgeable staff who may be aware of local teachers of holistic-assessment skills, herbal-medicine-making, or who may lead wild-plant walks. (Local nature centers, plant nurseries, greenhouses, horticultural clubs, and native-plant-appreciation societies may know of local wild-plant-walk instructors as well.) Finally, check the phone book for local naturopaths, herbalists, acupuncturists, and other holistic-health professionals who may be willing to mentor you on some of these skills.

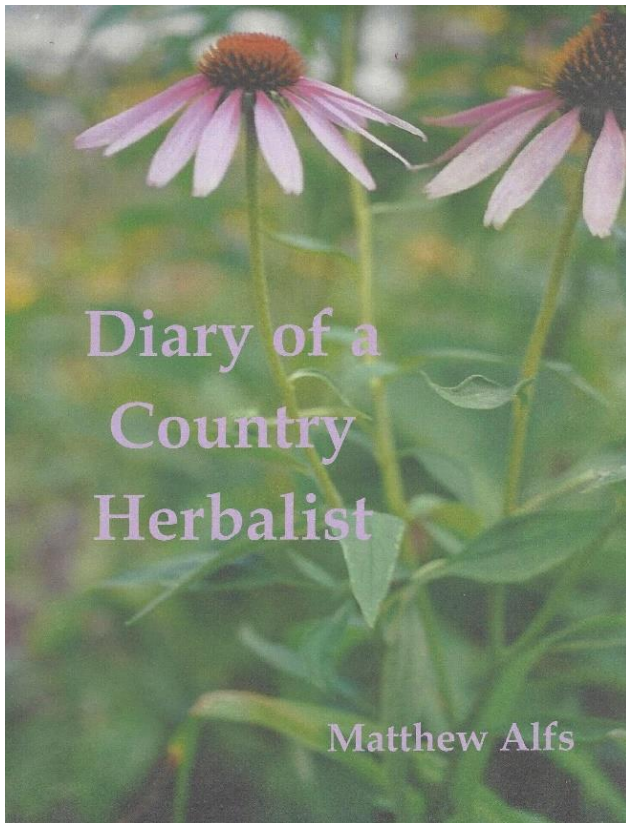
Sept. 29th-Oct. 3rd, 2016. "American Herbalists Guild's 27th Annual Symposium," **Seven Springs, PA** For more info or to register, visit the website www.americanherbalistsguild.com.

MWSHS Student Newsletter, Spring 2016. Entire contents copyright © 2016 by Midwest School of Herbal Studies. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Any opinions expressed by contributors are those of their own and not necessarily those of the Midwest School of Herbal Studies. Articles on the use of plants for health are for educational purposes only. All readers are encouraged to see their professional health-care provider for illness or injury. Correspondence should be addressed to us by mail at Midwest School of Herbal Studies, P O Box 120096, New Brighton MN 55112 or by email at MWSHS@aol.com.

An Interview with MWSHS Director Matthew Alfs About His Newest Book, *Diary of a Country Herbalist*

MWSHS Coordinator: So you have a new book coming out?

Director Matthew Alfs: Yes, indeed. It's called *Diary of a Country Herbalist* and it is a softcover book of 152pp., with a beautiful front cover, as you can see below. (That's purple coneflower [echinacea] pictured above the title, as many of the students may recognize.)



MWSHS Coordinator: I understand that this book is somewhat different from previous books you have written. How so?

Director Matthew Alfs: Well, first of all, let me mention that it *is* similar in that it deals heavily with edible and medicinal wild plants like my previous books and the herbal-studies program I wrote for MWSHS students. In fact, it details the gifts that *over 75 different wild plants* offer in the ways of food, medicine, and utility. The major

difference is that this book is a novel—a work of historical fiction.

MWSHS Coordinator: A novel?

Director Matthew Alfs: That's right. Years ago—as I explain in the foreword to the book—a friend encouraged me to share the things that are important to me in a story format that people of all ages and educational levels could read and enjoy. This book is the result. As it stands, it is designed to appeal to a much broader audience than I've typically found and especially to lovers of fiction. It is, however, an *educational* novel, as I mentioned earlier, which is quite a unique approach for a work of fiction.

MWSHS Coordinator: You mentioned a bit earlier that it is also in the realm of *historical* fiction. Could you tell us something about that?

Director Matthew Alfs: I'd be happy to do that. I think I'll use my summary from the back of the book, which I believe does a good job in outlining the story. So....

The setting for this heartwarming novel is the upper-Midwestern U.S.A., where, in the mid-1980s, herbalist “Sunflower” Sam Rogers and his schoolteacher wife, April, find themselves living an enviable life of devotion to simplicity, chronicled daily in a diary of their second year as homesteaders on a large tract of land known as “Weedhaven.”

While Sam busies himself educating folks in the area about the power of wild plants to nourish and to heal and April applies herself to shaping the young minds in her care, the couple still find time to traverse the length and breadth of Weedhaven on an almost daily basis—treasuring not only its fruits and beauty, but also their own growing love in the midst of this most precious Eden. Along the way, they adopt a pair of bear cubs, befriend a flock of crows, and help young and old alike to look at life anew.

Still, all is not bliss: With a down-home kind of spunk, Sam and April brave several personal tragedies, a deadly flu epidemic, and the prejudices of those unacquainted with the wisdom of simple living. All the while, they continue to expound the riches of country life to city friends and relatives, the power of herbal medicine to all who will hear, and the incomparable joy of wild-plant foods to those still young at heart.

MWSHS Coordinator: Is there anything else you would like to add about this project and what it means to you?

Director Matthew Alfs: I was hoping you would ask that! I really believe that this is *the most important book I have written so far*, because it attempts to help people to understand the importance of *living in harmony with nature*. In so doing, it really tugs at the heartstrings—as a few of my friends who have read the book in an earlier draft have noted—because the reader truly comes to love the characters and to share deeply in their joys and sorrows.

MWSHS Coordinator: This all sounds very appealing! What is the publication date for the book? And can MWSHS students acquire it any earlier?

Director Matthew Alfs: The publication date is August 1st, 2016, which means that it will first be available in bookstores and via internet booksellers on that date. However, both my students and my patients can secure a *pre-publication copy* of the book, which will be available in *late May* or *early June* from the website of our sister company, Old Theology Book House, at www.oldtheologybookhouse.com. (Because the book will not be necessary to consult for the herbal program, however, please note that it will not be available from the School's website.)

MWSHS Coordinator: Thank you for your time, Director Alfs. I'm sure that all of the students are anxiously looking forward to reading your new book!

"MWSHS Alumni" (continued from page 1)

In fact, this was what I did for 'me time.' By treating it as something rewarding just for me, I was able to set aside the time alone to work on it. In other ways, though, I involved my sons, which was fun for all of us. I asked them to quiz me on material for tests and also taught them many of the things I was learning. It helped me to learn the information better and it was exciting to see them eager to acquire some herbal knowledge, too.

"Studying herbalism really becomes a passion. I think it's so exciting to learn how you can have a really amazing effect on improving your health or that of others. Especially as you learn to start putting it all together into creating formulas, it becomes so much fun. I think you will find that you want to keep studying more and more and just take the ball and run with it. You'll begin to find the aspects of it that appeal to you most, and those will open up further doors for you for studying and specializing in. It could even lead to having your own professional practice, if that's your goal."

Tracey's own health issues and desire to help others led her to pursue even further education, including "a year-long course which I'm just now finishing up to become a Certified Emotional Healing Coach—a program which

utilizes flower essences, aromatherapy, herbs, nutritionals, and a great variety of really powerful emotional healing techniques in order to address the emotional issues such as unresolved trauma and abuse that have such a great effect on our overall health and well-being."

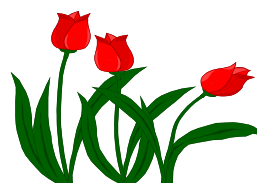
"I also turned to what I call the 'Zen' of crochet. I have had a life-long love for crochet, and just the meditative action of crocheting combined with the enjoyment of creating beautiful items was extremely therapeutic for me. I actually turned that into a hobby business to help myself start to heal, and I started an Etsy shop where I sell the beautiful things I create. I really enjoy photographing the items for my shop at the local Botanical Gardens. You can find my shop at www.SpiritOfTheBear.etsy.com, and if you look under the 'About' section you can see where I share my story and my journey.

"I'm also actually getting to learn how to train service dogs through the local service dog agency. (Molly, my very own service dog, appears in the photo with me on page 1.) It has been an incredibly rewarding and healing experience for me, and I plan on continuing to learn how to train service dogs and help others in that way. It's one of the long term goals I have."

As for her immediate goals, Tracey informs us: "I'm just now getting ready to start a practice as a Natural Wellness Consultant – combining my training as a Master Herbalist, a Certified Reflexologist, and Certified Emotional Healing Coach to help others integrate emotional healing with physical health for an overall holistic approach to well-being. Not only do I help people, but I am also very passionate about helping animals as well and provide some great healthy pet food and nutritional products with what I do also. I have a web address that will be my business website very shortly, as soon as it is designed. You'll be able to find that at www.SpiritOfTheBearLLC.com.

"You might be wondering why the name 'Spirit Of The Bear': I had learned through my herbal studies that many native cultures all over the world view the bear as the healer—the symbol of courage, strength, resourcefulness, and more. I chose for the sake of my sons to dig down deep and find that spirit of the bear in me and fight for my healing and be the one who would help others in the same situation recover and heal, too. My motto is 'Healing and Happiness through Courage and Creativity' – with the Spirit of the Bear."

Know that we here at MWSHS are very proud of you, Tracey, and excited for you as you continue to reach your goals in the rewarding field of natural healing!



PRE-REGISTRATION FORM FOR MWSHS WORKSHOP

Student Name:.....Student I.D. #.....
Workshop Title..... Date(s).....
Hours.....
Total Cost Payment Enclosed: (Check).....(M.O.)(C.C)

If paying by Credit Card, you must supply ALL of the following information in order for us to process.
(Note: Will clear as “Midwest Herbs & Healing.”) Make checks out to “Midwest School of Herbal Studies.”

Credit Card Number..... Expir. Date.....
CDC Code (last group of 3- or 4 digits in series of numbers on reverse of card *near signature strip*)
Digits of Mailing Address to which Credit Card Bill goes to:.....
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In Coming Issues

* *Student & Alumni Profiles*

* *Book Reviews*

* *News & Views*

* *Informational Articles*

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