



# "The Foxglove Fanfare"

"We bring gardening down to earth"

The Uxbridge Horticultural Society

www.uxbridgehorticulturalsociety.com

July 2009 - Series 6, Volume 5

Life throws us many curves; some good, some not so good and some very painful. Pam, as most of you know has had her share of them. But the marvelous person she is, and always thinking of others still wanted to fill this space for our newsletter.

But this was not the time to think of others, and therefore she will be back in September with her funny and witty message.

Our most sincere sympathy goes out to you Pam, on the loss of your brother.

*Chris*

## Quote of the Month

*My green thumb came only as a result of the mistakes I made while learning to see things from the plant's point of view.*

*H. Fred Ale*

## Member's Notice board

Please give your Zehr's (Uxbridge) tapes to Marg Saban or drop them in the Zehr's box at the reception desk.

If you would like to advertise your business by leaving flyers or business cards at the info desk, please feel free to do so; simply clear it first with Rick or Pam.

## *The Volunteers*

*Many will be shocked to find  
When the day of judgement nears  
That there is a special place in Heaven  
Set aside for volunteers  
Furnished with big recliners  
Satin couches and footstools  
Where there is no Committee Chairperson  
No group leaders or car pools  
No eager team that needs a coach  
No bazaar and no bake sale  
There will be nothing to staple  
Not one thing to fold or mail  
Telephone lists will be outlawed  
But a finger snap will bring  
Cool drinks and gourmet dinners  
And rare treats fit for a King.  
You asked, who'll serve these privileged few  
And work for all they're worth  
Why, all those who reaped the benefits  
And not Once Volunteered on earth.*

*Author Unknown*

## Support the Businesses who support us:

A special "**Thank You**" to all those who donate door prizes. It is always very much appreciated

You've  
gotta read this...



*From the desk of Gini Sage*  
Durham Master Gardener

### Herb of the Month

#### Sweet Marjoram – *Origanum hortensis*

Sweet Marjoram is a close relative to oregano, but has its own distinct, slightly spicy flavour. Sweet marjoram is a tender perennial most commonly grown as an annual in our area. It is best to plant out small seedlings from the garden centre as this is a fairly slow growing plant. Marjoram should be planted in rich, well-drained soil in full to part sun. Ensure that it is not overcrowded with other plants, as it benefits from air movement around the plant. It may also be grown in pots, clipped back, brought indoors and placed in a sunny window for the winter.

Marjoram grows to 12 inches tall, with greyish-green leaves. The flowers are white and cluster on spikes. Both the fresh leaves and flowers of marjoram are edible, and may be used in a variety of dishes. The leaves may also be harvested and frozen for up to two months, or dried and stored in an airtight container.



### Recipe of the Month

#### Roasted Sweet Potatoes with Mushrooms and Shallots

Nonstick vegetable oil spray  
1/4 cup low-salt chicken broth or vegetable broth  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
2 pounds red-skinned sweet potatoes (yams), peeled, cut into 1 inch chunks  
10 large shallots, peeled, halved through root end  
4 bay leaves  
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon chopped fresh marjoram  
8 ounces large fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed, caps quartered  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 400°F. Spray large rimmed baking sheet with nonstick spray. Whisk chicken or vegetable broth, olive oil, and balsamic vinegar in small bowl. Mix sweet potatoes, shallots, bay leaves, and 1 tablespoon marjoram in large bowl. Pour half of broth mixture over and toss; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss mushrooms, 1 tablespoon marjoram, and remaining broth mixture in medium bowl; sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Spread sweet potato mixture on baking sheet. Roast until potatoes begin to soften, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes. Mix in mushrooms. Return to oven; roast until potatoes and mushrooms are tender, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes longer. Transfer to bowl. Mix in parsley and 1 teaspoon marjoram.

### Flower of the Month

#### Blazing Star or Gay-feather – *Liatris spicata*



*Liatris*, or Blazing Star is originally a wildflower native to Ontario, Central Canada and the Northern U.S. that is very attractive to a number of butterflies and hummingbirds. Forming a clump of grassy looking leaves, the purple, mauve or white flower spikes grow up to three feet tall in mid summer. *Liatris* will bloom from mid-summer right into early fall, making it a welcome addition to the perennial border. The plants prefer full sun, and a well-drained soil, and are somewhat drought tolerant. The clumps may be divided every three to four years, or the plants may be started from seed. Simply allow the seed heads to ripen in the fall, and allow them to reseed themselves around the parent plant. Or, collect the seed and start indoors 6-8 weeks before the last spring frost.

The spikes of *Liatris* make a nice contrast when planted next to *Echinacea purpurea* 'White Swan', tall garden phlox, perennial Baby's Breath and *Sedum* Autumn Joy.