

May 2020



# MANSION HOUSE NEWS

WESTPORT  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## DELAYED OPENING

Because of the continued threat of the CORONA VIRUS, the **1855 Harris-Kearney House is now scheduled to reopen on June 5** at 1 pm. Please check our website and Facebook pages for updates.

## SPRING

In old days past, the gathering of wild plant food was especially important for the household. Picking wild berries, edible leaves, and roots was a necessity to maintain a store of supplies for tonics, teas, elixirs, and other medicines made from recipes passed down for generations. Wild spring greens such as dandelion, asparagus, poke and sorrel were a good vitamin source after the long winter.

Spring is a time of constant change. So fast do these changes occur that attention is required each day before the plants are up, there, and gone. It is mystifying, uplifting, and satisfying to see plant life begin again in the rich spring soil after the long cold winter.

## ARMED FORCES DAY

On February 27, 1950, President Harry Truman proclaimed the first Armed Forces Day to be Saturday, May 20, 1950. The day marked the first combined demonstration of the progress of America's defense team.

Today, Armed Forces Day is a day set aside to pay tribute to, and thank, the men and women who serve in the United States Armed Forces. Each year, the day is celebrated on the third Saturday in May and is part of Armed Forces Week.

Thanks to all for your service and commitment to our country!

## Mark Your 2020 Calendar of Events

Because of the continued uncertainty with the COVID-19 Virus, our new tentative 2020 Calendar of Events is listed below. Exact dates will be announced as soon as it is safe for large groups to gather once again.

- Doll Extravaganza:** August and September
- Kansas City Area's Music History, Programs and Concerts:** Following June 5 through 2020
- Quilt Extravaganza:** Oct-Thanksgiving weekend
- Lost Arts Fair:** Canceled for 2020
- Annual Meeting and Luncheon:** TBA
- Christmas Open House:** December 5 and 6
- House Closes for the Season:** December 19
- House Opens for the Season:** March 5, 2021

Special events and speakers to be announced.

## MAY HOLIDAYS

- May 10 Mother's Day
- May 16 Armed Forces Day
- May 25 Memorial Day

## *Aunt Minerva's Kitchen*

### Lilac Jelly

Lilac jelly is one of the easiest flower jellies to make, because the lilac flowers are so abundant. They're one of my favorite parts of spring, with their heady aroma filling the countryside.

- 2 cups packed lilac blossoms, no leaves, no stems
- 2 1/2 cups boiling water
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 4 cups sugar
- One box powdered pectin
  - Place the blossoms in a heat resistant container and pour the boiling water over. Allow them to steep 8 hours or overnight.
  - When ready to can, sterilize four 8-ounce jars or eight 4-ounce jars, keep hot. Heat lids and rings in hot water, keep warm but not boiling. Fill water bath canner and bring to boil.
  - Strain the flowers out of the water. Squeeze dry. You should have 2 1/4 cups of lilac infused water. Add more water if needed.
  - Place the flower infusion, lemon juice, and pectin in a large heavy bottom pot. Bring to a rolling boil.
  - Add sugar all at once, return to boil. Boil for one minute, stirring constantly. Skim foam if needed. Remove from heat.
  - Ladle jam into hot, sterilized jars leaving 1/4" headspace. Wipe rims clean and screw on the lids.
  - Process for 10 minutes in water bath canner
  - Remove jars from canner and allow to rest until cool overnight. Remove rings, wipe any drips and label for storage.
  - Makes around 4 half pint jars or 8 – 4-ounce jars.

The best lilacs for jelly are light purple, which give a bright yellow jelly, and dark purple flowers which make a darker jelly. Only use lilacs that don't have any chemicals on them. Make sure to pull the blossoms off of the stems, as stems can make the jelly bitter. You don't need to wash the flowers unless you think they might be dusty. (They get sterilized by boiling water and the canning process.) Do not double the batches as jelly is best when made in one batch at a time.



### MAY'S SPECIAL FLOWER

The month of May brings forth fragrant Lily of the Valley flowers. Native to Europe and distributed to North America and Northern Asia, this lovely flower signifies sweetness, humility and a return to happiness. According to legend, Lily of the Valley flowers sprouted up from Eve's tears after she was kicked out of the Garden of Eden.



## SANTITIZE WASHING MACHINE AND LAURNDRY

When bacterial or viral infections hit, one of the first things you might think of is getting your laundry washed. However, just putting the clothing in the wash isn't going to get rid of those germs. You have to disinfect your washing machine and laundry to get all truly clean.

### Disinfect a Washing Machine

It is important to clean your washing machine to ensure that all those bacteria and viruses are blasted. To clean your washing machine, follow these easy steps:

1. Add 2 cups of peroxide.
2. Run it through a cycle using the hottest water.
3. Add 1½ cups of baking soda.
4. Run it through another cycle.
5. Fill a spray bottle with straight vinegar.
6. Spray the lid and wipe down the rubber areas.
7. Wipe it out.

### Disinfecting White Clothes

Disinfect your white clothes by following these directions:

1. Wash your clothing in hot water that is 140 degrees.
2. Use laundry detergent and bleach.
3. Place clothes in the dryer for at least 45 minutes.

### Disinfecting Colored Clothes

To disinfect colored clothes:

Do not use hot water, instead, use cold water to wash delicate and bright, rich colors. Using cold water means there has to be an alternative to kill germs, and bleach is NOT an option. Use the warmest water allowed on your labels.

1. Use laundry detergent
2. Use a bleach alternative.
3. Dry for at least 45 minutes.

Dry your clothing or linens on the highest setting indicated on labels until the clothing items are completely dry. Iron clothes to kill any remaining germs left from the washing process. Both the dryer and/or iron should be at least 135 degrees.

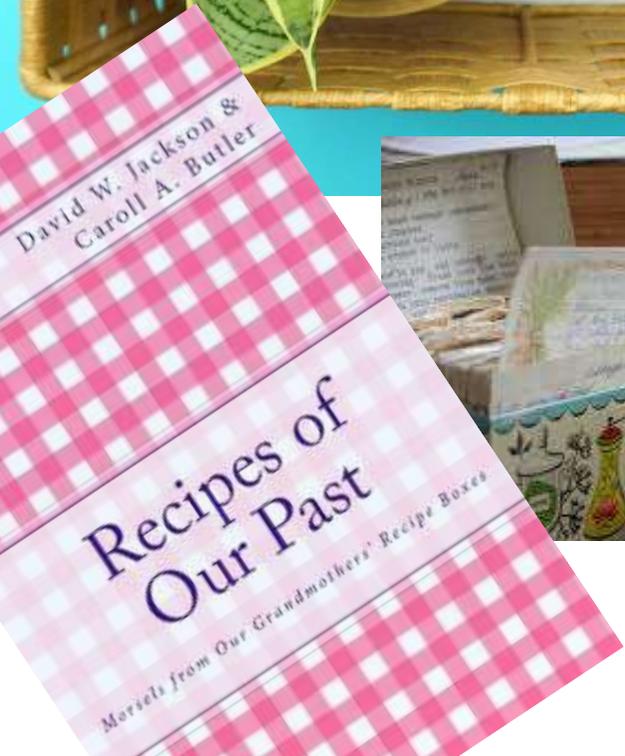




## HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO MOTHERS, GRANDMOTHERS, STEP MOTHERS, GODMOTHERS, MOTHERS-IN-LAW & ALL MOTHERLY FIGURES

Some Mother's Day gift ideas:

- Fresh flower arrangements
- Jewelry
- Framed photos of grandchildren
- Gift certificate for a weekend get-a-way
- Subscription to a favorite box—delivery
- Homemade items from grandchildren
- Gift certificate for house cleaning
- Potted plants
- Gift certificate to a favorite restaurant
- Pretty stationery and stamps

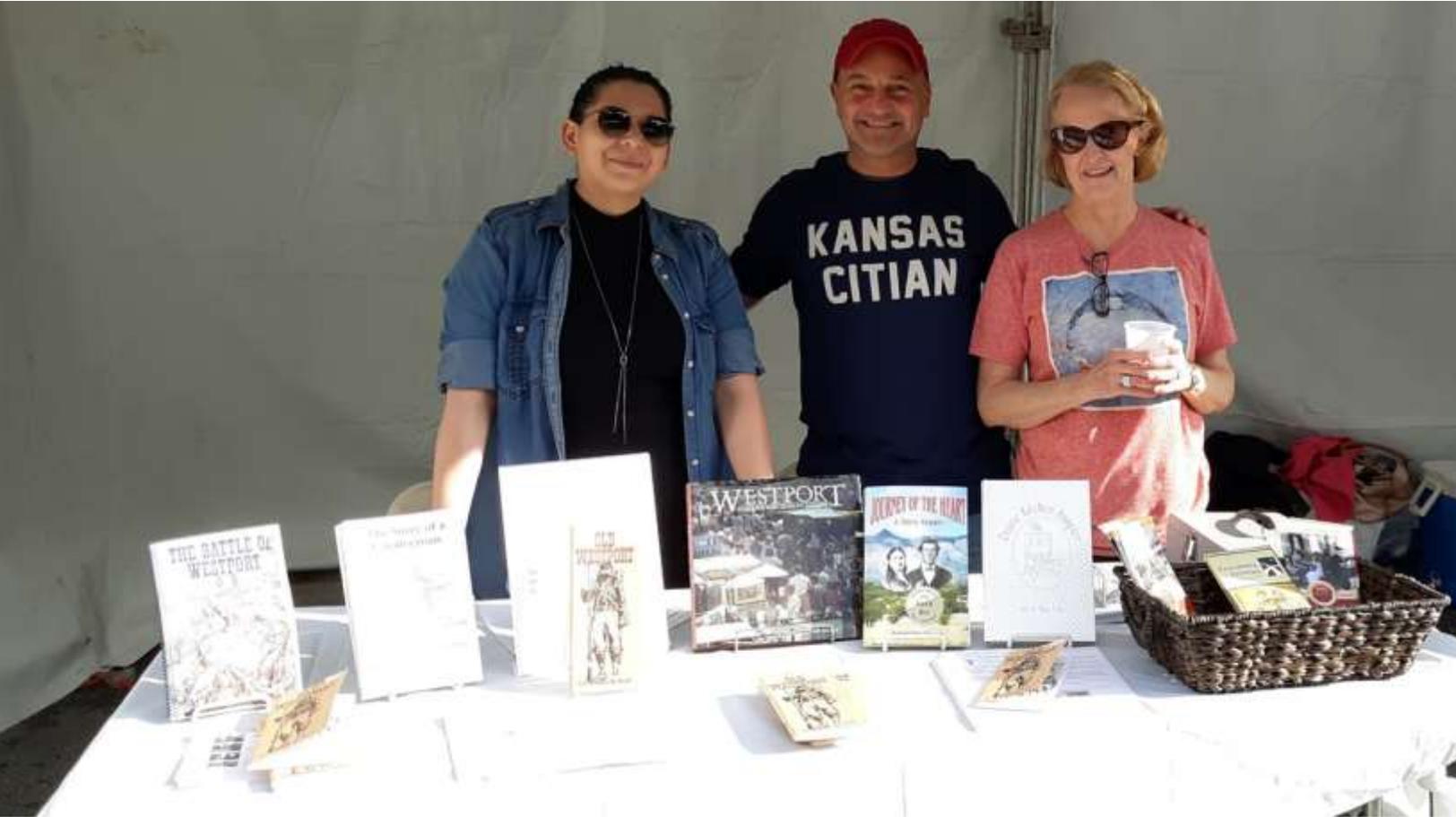


## A SPRING WALK

If possible, take your children on a short walk outdoors and around the neighborhood. Along the way ask them questions like "Where is the squirrel? Or what color are the flowers? How many trees can you count?" Ask older children to read the street signs. When everyone is at home again, have the children draw pictures of what they saw on their walk, or maybe present them with a coloring book full of nature pictures to color. Older children might write a story about their walk. A discussion of what everyone saw on the walk might be fun dinnertime conversation.

Because of where you might live and if you have a "stay at home order," it may not be feasible to take your children on a walk outside. For a fun walk inside your home, display several magazine or poster pictures around a room that show springtime scenes. Lead children on their "spring walk" around the room to observe the scenes. Ask questions that refer to the pictures. Also, comment as you move along: "Look how green the trees and grass are! There are lots of flowers growing in the park. Oh, it's raining!" Encourage children to comment, too. Discuss both the outside walk and/or the inside walk with children, coaching them to use this pattern when they respond: I saw \_\_\_ on our walk. You can supplement children's responses with descriptive words: "You saw tall pink flowers on our walk, etc." If time permits, have children work together to make a springtime mural. Older children can label the mural with a caption of their choice. Invite children to take turns telling about their contributions to the mural.

Whatever kind of Spring Walk you take, enjoy with your children!  
~unknow author



Westport Historical Society seeks volunteers:

--Board Members (including Treasurer)

--Executive Director

-Docents and other volunteers **FOUR HOURS A WEEK**  
(W, Th, F, or Sat, 1-5 p.m.)

If you are interested, or you would like more information, e-mail Alana Smith  
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