

Herbs Make Scents



THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLIX, NUMBER 5

SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
MAY 2026

Co-Editors Linda Alderman (ewalderman@comcast.net) & Janice Freeman (janicehfreeman@comcast.net)

April 2026 Calendar

May 9, Sat. 9:00 am

Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035

May 12, Tues. 10:00 am
Public Invited

Day Meeting "Shrubs: The Beverage, not Boscage and Bushes" at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Book Group following program to discuss **Miss Benson's Beetle** by Rachel Joyce (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52674676-miss-benson-s-beetle?ref=nav_sb_ss_1_12)

May 20, Wed. 6 :15 pm
Public Invited

Evening Meeting "Bringing Butterflies Home" presented by **Elizabeth White Olsen**, B.A. Plan II Honors and English, UT Austin; M.F.A. Writing, Vermont College of Fine Arts; M.F.A. Writing, Texas State University San Marcos; Landscape Certification Levels 1 and 3, Native Plant Society of Texas; & co-founder Houston's GO Native Landscaping. Location: Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Doors open at 6:15 pm, with potluck meal and program at 7:00 pm.
Free and Open to the Public.

May 23, Sat. 9:00 am

Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035

June 2026 Calendar

June 9, Tues. 10:00 am

Day Meeting Adventure Luncheon at Arpi's Phoenicia Deli (<https://arpisdeli.com/>) and tour of Phoenicia Market - more details to follow

June 13, Sat. 9:00

Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035

June 17, Wed. 6 :15 pm
Members Only

Evening Meeting: STU Members Annual Business Meeting
Location: Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Doors open at 6:15 pm, with potluck meal at 7:00 pm followed by the Annual Business Meeting

June 27, Sat. 9:00 am

Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035

Newsletter deadline is the 25th of the month, and is strictly enforced (May co-editor is Janice Freeman)

Readers: We apologize for issues with hyperlinks. Some open quick, others slow & some not at all.

Imigbin.com

Happy Birthday



5/1 Sue Steinhardt
5/5 Angela Roth
5/13 Jane Littell

5/18 Cynthia Card
5/18 Deborah Niskin





Chairman's Corner

All I can say is, "Way to Go STU!!!" I heard wonderful things about EdCon and am extremely grateful for every last one of you!! **Catherine O'Brien** was an absolute Rock Star as was **Karen Cottingham!** All of you who enjoyed the San Antonio River Walk and all things HERBAL, know that I was thinking of you! I was celebrating 50 Years of Women at USNA!

Memories of a lifetime were made. From seeing old friends to cheering on new graduates-to-be and everything in between. I was heartened by the fact that it isn't such a big deal for a woman to want to serve her country in uniform. Women have proven so much over the decades, even before President Ford signed Public Law 94-106 on October 7th, 1975. Service from WAVES to WASPS and everyone in between was a pivotal support to women being allowed to enter the Service Academies.



Former Chief of Naval Operations (middle) and the Smith Sisters

People claim that the Naval Academy takes away all your rights and grants them back as privileges. I will have you know that my senior year, we were allowed to grow plants and I sprouted a bunch of herbs in an egg carton. However, I totally forgot to find someone to care for them over a basketball trip and Spring Break...they became my first dried herbs!!

I have learned a great deal about growing and using herbs since 1983 and my classmates love the food I make for them during reunions.

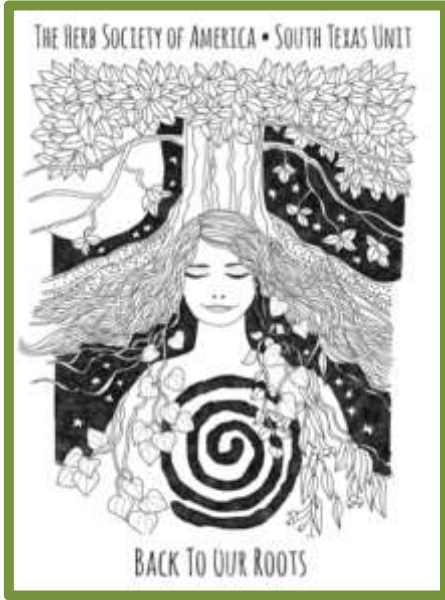
Thank you all for the service you give as part of our Herb Society mission. Now that I am an "Old Salt", as a member of the fourth USNA class, I appreciate the addition of herbs to that moniker!!

Thank you all for the efforts you put into EdCon!! I also want to shout out to **Benée Curtis** for an absolutely wonderful revamp of our website!!

Go Herbies!! Angela



(Left) Dulce Carroll (Soon-to-be) 2nd Lt. in US Marine Corp



Back to Our Roots at the Westbury Garden

Westbury Workdays

Saturday, May 9 @ 9am
Saturday, May 23 @ 9 am

Saturday, June 13 @ 9am
Saturday, June 27 @ 9am



Elderberry Flower

Elderberries

Last year I was able to harvest elderflower from **Angela Roth** and elderberry from **Debbie Lancaster**. We used the elderflower in the Queen of Hungary Water kit and we used the elderberry in a kit to make syrup. Both of these items were big sellers at last year's Herb Fair. If you have these plants and would like to use them for products for the fair, call when they are ready to harvest. I also have a one-gallon elderberry plant that needs a good home. Let me know if you have space for this wonderful plant.

Please refer to our handy list of herbs that we use for Herbal Marketplace products printed in this newsletter. These are the herbs that members should grow, gather and store for Herb Fair. We harvest regularly from the beds at WCG and members take them home to dry. The same procedure would apply to herbs that you have in your home gardens. There are openings on the Tea Committee for members to make suggestions for new products and help with the process. Contact Julie (832-969-8349) to get involved. See you at the garden! Julie

Remember to grow the listed herbs, harvest, dry and store them in a labelled bag. Save for Herb Events!



LIST FOR GROWING AND HARVESTING HERBS

<input type="checkbox"/> Bay Leaf	<input type="checkbox"/> Doublemint Madalene Hill	<input type="checkbox"/> Rose Petal
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Butterfly Pea	<input type="checkbox"/> Elderberry flowers & berries	<input type="checkbox"/> Roselle
<input type="checkbox"/> Basil (Holy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lemon Balm	<input type="checkbox"/> Sage
<input type="checkbox"/> Calendula	<input type="checkbox"/> Lemongrass	<input type="checkbox"/> Spearmint
<input type="checkbox"/> Chamomile	<input type="checkbox"/> Lemon Verbena	<input type="checkbox"/> Thyme
<input type="checkbox"/> Comfrey	<input type="checkbox"/> Mexican Mint Marigold	<input type="checkbox"/> Yarrow
	<input type="checkbox"/> Peppermint	



STU Members & Guests Enjoying a Special Tour of “Contained & Arranged”



Ceramist Judy Adams hosted STU members and friends for a guided tour of "Contained & Arranged", the Annual Floral/Ceramics show at Foelber Pottery Gallery. Here she is next to the kiln where all the magic takes place! She is holding one of the tiles from a NASA rocket, which they use to control the temperature in the kiln.



The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA

Around the District News

Catherine O'Brien

The Heritage Herb Garden Spring Extravaganza is now live on Ticketleap

<https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/ozarkfolkcenter/heritage-herb-garden-spring-extravaganza-2026>

Accommodations: [https://reserve.arkansasstateparks.com/ozark-folk-](https://reserve.arkansasstateparks.com/ozark-folk-center?_ga=2.19490555.27219469.1774369659-1409471452.1773186669)

[center?_ga=2.19490555.27219469.1774369659-1409471452.1773186669](https://reserve.arkansasstateparks.com/ozark-folk-center?_ga=2.19490555.27219469.1774369659-1409471452.1773186669)

**Looking Ahead...
June 17 is Our Annual
Business Meeting**



***Please plan to attend
We need your ideas for
the best path forward
for the STU!***



**ANOTHER PUBLIC
SERVICE
ANNOUNCEMENT
ABOUT YOUR
HSA-STU
MEMBERSHIP**

Have you taken a look at our gorgeous website recently? If not, check it out here - <https://herbsociety-stu.org/home.html>

This should be your "go to" spot for upcoming events, membership contact information, and access to our outstanding newsletters back to 2014. Individual herbs are spotlighted by our member-authors, along with comprehensive handouts from recent meetings, and so much more! And all in a "user-friendly" format. A huge "THANK YOU" goes to Benée Curtis, who recently reorganized and refreshed our entire website. *It's an amazing resource!*



lmigbin.com

May Day May 1st



SAVE THE DATE FOR
53rd ANNUAL HERB FAIR

NOVEMBER 7, SATURDAY
9 am – 2 pm

“Spice Up Your Life with a Healthy Mocktail”

From the slide of Gayle Engles

"Hibiscus sabdariffa can help lower body temperature, blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol, and is a mild diuretic. Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*) has been used to help with colds, flu, headaches, fatigue, stress, and digestive issues. Together in a tisane (herbal tea); one part hibiscus, 3 parts mint; it is good both hot and cold. Best to make it strong; it can always be diluted. This is a refreshing, non-alcoholic, warm weather libation."

*Fill a glass with ice, 1/3-1/2 full of hibiscus + mint. Top off with your favorite sparkling water, tonic water, or club soda. Garnish with a preserved hibiscus calyx and/or a sprig of fresh mint.

*Hibiscus in syrup

Fill a sterile jar with fresh hibiscus, calyces (what are commonly called "flowers" although they are actually the outer portion of the flower). Really pack them in!

Make a double-strength simple syrup by combining:

1 cup sugar

½ cup water

Add the sugar and water to a small saucepan over medium heat. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Pour the simple syrup over the calyces. Run a knife around the inside of the jar to disperse air bubbles. Seal, label, cool, and refrigerate. With this amount of sugar, the hibiscus in syrup will keep for months.





“It’s Spicier in Texas”



Susan, Elizabeth, Debbie, EdCon attendees from STU, all born on March 1st!



Maria and Donald

and the STU proves it!

Back row: Palma, Susan, Stephanie, Debbie N, Elizabeth, Mary, Maria, Donna W, Karen, Cynthia, Gayle, and Eric; Front row: Virginia, Debbie L, Julie, Laura, Donna Y, Catherine, Gwen, and Jimmie. Dena was sometimes on “Mom duty” with Harrison. Below: Karen with Bill Varney, and “Merriwether” Vorderbruggen, who were both happy to sign copies of their books.



Remember the Alamo



And the EdCon Quilt Winner is...



Debbie Lancaster was thrilled to win this colorful hand-crafted fabric-flower necklace



Rae McKimm, member of the Ozark and Arkansas Units of the HSA, is the lucky winner of the gorgeous quilt donated by STU member Laura Boston. Thank you, Laura!



Catherine O'Brien and her team of raffle rousers Debbie L, Donna W, Stephanie, Elizabeth, Palma, and Julie did an excellent job of displaying the raffle items, selling tickets, and delivering the items to the lucky winners. Thanks also to Angela Roth and Linda and Steven van Heekeren for donating lovely baskets.

***All proceeds support
HSA's Education Programs.***




Check out the new butterfly pea plant profile on our website

*You will find:
Growing tips, recipes, and color-changing "magic" fun.
Prepared by Karen Cottingham and Virginia Camerlo.*

Everyone attending EdCon received a gift packet of butterfly pea seeds compliments of Julie Fordes & STU members

Lavender Sachets for Everyone!



*Welcome to Texas Ya'll!
Enjoy a Complimentary Lavender Sachet from the South Texas Unit*

The STU surprised all EdCon attendees with an old-fashioned hand-crafted lavender sachet. What a sweet memento of this wonderful event! Thanks to Karen Cottingham and her team of stitchers - Maria Treviño, Angela Roth, Janice Freeman, and Debbie Lancaster.



Members

It's time to plan ahead

Due	STU Members	Contact
6/1	Update contact information for Directory	Janice Freeman
6/17	Attend Annual Meeting	Angela Roth
7/1	Submit Annual Dues	Maria Treviño
7/15	Submit Individual Member STU Volunteer Hours	Janice Freeman

The HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA



Around the District News

Catherine O'Brien

Ozark Unit's Heritage Herb Spring Extravaganza - May 8-9 Ozark Folk Center, Mountain View, Arkansas.

The Heritage Herb Garden Spring Extravaganza is now live on Ticketleap <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/ozarkfolkcenter/heritage-herb-garden-spring-extravaganza-Accomodations>;
https://reserve.arkansasstateparks.com/ozark-folk-center?_ga=2.19490555.27219469.1774369659-1409471452.1773186669

Did You Know?

Star Anise, *Illicium verum* is part of the schisandraceae (star-vine family). It is the fruit of a small Chinese evergreen tree related to the magnolia. The star-shaped fruits, which are harvested while unripe and allowed to dry in the sun, form five to ten points, each containing a single seed. The oils are concentrated not in the seeds themselves but in the star-shaped nutshell, called pericarp.

In recent years, however, as much as 90 percent of the world's harvest of star anise has been purchased by the pharmaceutical industry to make Tamiflu, a drug used to combat flu pandemics.

The trees grow in China, Vietnam, and Japan. Japanese star anise (*Illicium anisatum*), a close relative, is severely toxic and has poisoned people who picked it by mistake. It would be unwise, therefore, to harvest this one in the wild.

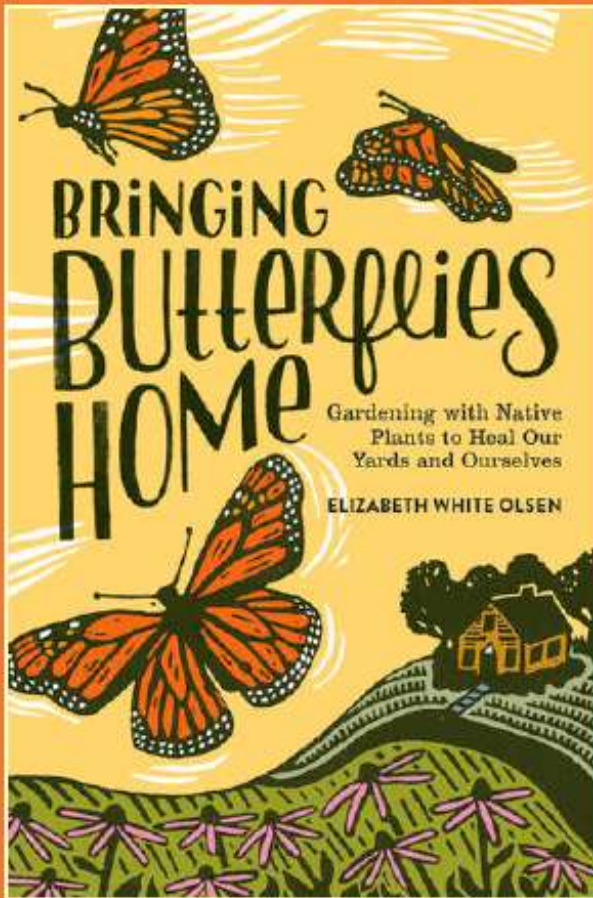
Excerpt from *The Drunken Botanist* by **Amy Stewart**





UPCOMING

Announcing Our May Evening Meeting:
*“See the landscape
through a butterfly’s eyes”*



*“Bringing
Butterflies Home”*
*A Discussion and
Book Signing by:*
Elizabeth White Olsen
May 20, 2026

*“Elizabeth White Olsen not only tells you how you can help butterflies, but also how butterflies can help you. Packed with wonderful information and more than a dollop of wisdom. **A must-read for everyone!**” (Douglas Tallamy, co-founder of Homegrown National Park and author of Bringing Nature Home).*



The Herb Society of America
South Texas Unit
P.O. Box 6515
Houston, TX 77265-6515



Find our Unit on the web at:
www.herbsociety-stu.org

Information obtained through your association with The South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Everyone, especially women who are pregnant or nursing and persons with known medical conditions, should consult their licensed healthcare provider before taking any herbal product.

While authors or speakers may cite how they personally use herbs and may quote scientific, ethnographic, folkloric, or historic literature, the material presented does not represent a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment.

Whom Do I Contact?

2025-26 STU Officers

Chair: Angela Roth

Co-Vice Chairs: *Karen Cottingham*
Ro Jones

Secretary: *Stephanie Calloway*

Treasurer: *Maria Treviño*

Standing Committees

Day Meeting Chair: *Benée Curtis*

Membership: *Janice Freeman*

- Member Concerns: *Donna Wheeler*

Publications

- Newsletter: *Linda Alderman*
Janice Freeman

- Website: *Benée Curtis*

- Social Media: *Virginia Camerlo*

Herb Fair: *Stephanie Calloway*

Grants & Scholarships: *Lucinda Kontos*

Speakers Bureau: *Virginia Camerlo*