

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLIX, NUMBER 7



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
JULY 2026

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

July 2026 Calendar

July 1	Deadline for Membership Renewal refer to page 5
July 11, Sat. 8:00 am	Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035
July 11, Sat. 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm	July Lagniappe Bastille Day 2026 , Houston's largest celebration of French culture and friendship. Alliance Française de Houston 427 Lovett Blvd, Houston TX RSVP soon - limited number of tickets Questions/RSVP: karen.herbssociety@gmail.com
July 14, Tues. 10:00 am Members Only	Day Meeting Planning Meeting for 2026-2027 Programs at the home of Benée Curtis RSVP to Benée if you'll be attending the planning meeting
July 15, Wed.	No Evening Meeting Summer Break
July 15, Wed.	Deadline for Membership Volunteer Hours are due refer to page 5
July 25, Sat. 8:00 am	Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035

Aug 2026 Calendar

Aug 8, Sat. 8:00 am	Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035
Aug 14, Tues.	No Day Meeting
Aug 19, Wed. 6:15 pm	Evening Meeting STU Members - Herb Fair 2026 Kick-off presented by Stephanie Calloway , Herb Fair Chair 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
Aug 22, Sat. 8:00 am	Westbury Garden Workday 12581 Dunlap St., Houston, TX 77035

Newsletter deadline is the 25th of the month, and is strictly enforced (Aug co-editor is Linda Alderman)



Happy Birthday!

7/10 – Mary Nurre and Gloria Hunter
7/15 – Sally Luna
7/17 - Joyce Taylor
7/24 – Laura Mullen
7/28 – Jeanie Dunnihoo



Summer Abundance for a Healthy Fall Harvest

Stephanie Calloway, Herb Fair Chair

Hello all,

With gardens overflowing with peppers, tomatoes, basil, and butterfly pea flowers, I am reminded that now is the time to start prepping for our fall harvest – clipping and drying herbs, planning for products and treats, and experimenting with new ways of making the most from our summer abundance. I am looking forward to my third year as Herb Fair Chair and welcome your input as we kickoff the planning season! We have a strong team of dedicated leaders and opportunities for new energy and fresh ideas. As we enter the hottest season of the year, I invite you to set aside time in the coming months to engage with STU members through a garden workday at Westbury Community Garden, attending an Herb Fair planning meeting or workshop, or simply sharing abundance from your own garden by harvesting and drying herbs for our upcoming Herb Fair in November.

We have a list of specific herbs that we would love to feature in our homegrown herbal teas and products. You can start harvesting now; ideal harvest time is around 9-10 am when essential oils are at their peak. Bring labeled bags of fully dried herbs with leaves stripped to an STU Day or Evening Meeting. Reach out to me if you have donations but are unable to attend a meeting (stephaniec621@gmail.com).

****Check out the STU website for a great article by Susan Wood on Harvesting, Drying, and Storing common herbs.**** Other great ways to support the Herb Fair as we enter Summer:

- Bring donations of cookbooks, gardening books, or gently used household items for the garden or kitchen to the August and September meetings. We welcome your donations for our Twice Found Bookstore and Resale. Thank you to **Laura Boston** for spearheading the effort again!
- Come to the August 19th Herb Fair planning meeting. This potluck gathering is open to STU members and those interested in volunteering to help make the Herb Fair a success!
- Mark your calendar - we are planning to be at the Southside Place Clubhouse 9am-3pm Friday and 7:30am-3pm Saturday

Happy Summer Season!
Stephanie



America

Herbs Make Scents – July





Herbs Make Scents

July 2026



Back to Our Roots at the Westbury Garden

Westbury Workdays

Saturday, July 11 @ 8am

Saturday, July 25 @ 8 am

Saturday, Aug. 8 @ 8 am

Saturday, Aug. 22 @ 8 am

Please make note of the **earlier starting time** for workdays, just trying to work when it is a little bit cooler.

We had a lovely bunch of plants given away at our last Evening Meeting. Thanks to **Jimmie Keddle** for growing these gorgeous green friends. Each member who took plants should help the cause by harvesting and drying some roselle and self heal when it is time.



We planted both Herbs of Promise lemon basil varieties in the Westbury Community Garden



Members of the Westbury Community Garden (WCG) Herb Committee planting some of Jimmie's roselle. Notice the tip of the olla in between the plants

Elder Flowers and Elderberry Update

I have been picking and drying elder flower this week. I hope you are too. When the berries are ready, I will arrange a little "harvest party" to gather them and take them off the stem. Watch for the invitation in a couple of weeks.

Herb Fair

Make sure you read **Stephanie Calloway's** Herb Fair article in this very newsletter and while you are at it, take a gander at the chart with all the herbs we need for the fair. We have published this before and will continue to put it in the newsletter until Herb Fair.



The Herbs of Promise Program

At the June Evening Meeting, we had 14 members sign up to take Mrs. Burns and Everleaf Lemon Basil home to grow during the next phase of the Herbs of Promise Program. On Saturday we planted 4 of each variety at the WBG. Each of the 14 gardeners who took lemon basil plants at the meeting received the data recording sheet sent from the Botany/Horticulture Committee at HSA. Reach out to me if you would like to participate in the data gathering. The June Herb of the Month information just happens to be Lemon Basil. Coincidence, I think not!

When the plants are ready to harvest, in a month or so maybe, the recipe testing portion of the study will begin. At that point, anyone can test recipes and evaluate the outcome. You do not need to already be a grower - just get some herbs from someone who is. More about this later.

Herb of the Month <https://blog.herbsociety.org/herb-of-the-month/lemon-basil/> recipes are on the HSA website for members.

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



LIST FOR GROWING AND HARVESTING HERBS

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| ☐ Bay Leaf | ☐ Doublemint Madalene Hill | ☐ Rose Petal |
| ☐ Blue Butterfly Pea | ☐ Elderberry flowers and berries | ☐ Roselle |
| ☐ Basil (Holy) | ☐ Lemon Balm | ☐ Sage |
| ☐ Calendula | ☐ Lemongrass | ☐ Spearmint |
| ☐ Chamomile | ☐ Lemon Verbena | ☐ Thyme |
| ☐ Comfrey | ☐ Mexican Mint Marigold | ☐ Yarrow |
| | ☐ Peppermint | |



**Meet Our New Herb
Society of America
President, Casey King,
pictured here with
Karen Cottingham
at EdCon 2026.**

**Congratulations,
Casey!**



MEMBER REMINDERS & Due Dates

□ Membership Renewal – July 1

Maria Treviño, Treasurer

The South Texas Unit membership renewals are **due in July**. Our goal is to collect as many of the dues as possible prior to the end of July. Watch for a invoice in your email. The invoice will have a PAY NOW button that will allow you to enter your credit card information and finalize the renewal process. You will also be able to go to the STU website and pay as usual. If you want to mail a check you can. The mailing address is: South Texas Unit P.O. Box 6515 Houston TX 77265

□ VOLUNTEER HOURS – July 15

Janice Freeman, Membership Chair

We are asked by HSA to submit a sum of our member's hours each year. It's that time of year to report your volunteer hours from the period of July 1, 2025 through the end of June 30, 2026. Volunteer hours are **due July 15th**. Send to **Janice Freeman** at janicehfreeman@comcast.net

What counts as voluntary hours? Refer to the **STU Guidelines for Reporting Hours and Donations** for the answers to this question. Look in the STU "yellow" **Directory**, page 25 or on the **STU Website**.

Hey y'all,

We're looking for a few warm and welcoming folks to help **support hospitality** at our upcoming evening meetings. Your energy and presence would be deeply appreciated!

We need volunteers for the following:
(roles can be split)

Tablecloths

Beverages

Tableware

AV Set-up (Audio-Visual) - This person keeps the speaker and projector and brings it to meetings.

If you're interested in helping out or want to learn more, email Ro Jones (roroagogo3@gmail.com) or call/text.

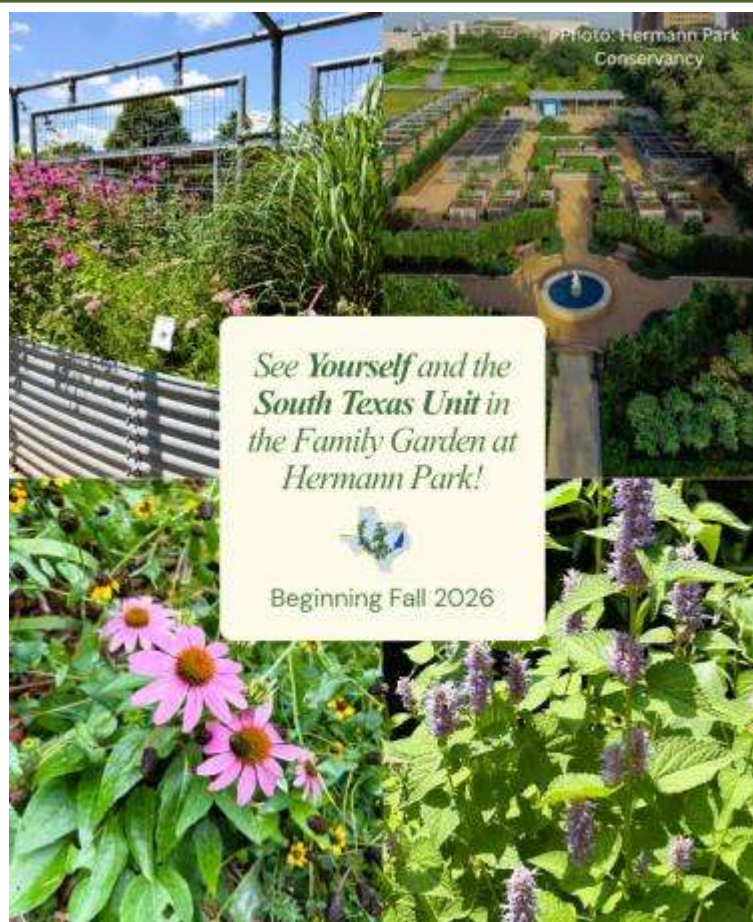


*Also, with heartfelt gratitude,
thank you to:*

Karen Cottingham, Virginia Camerlo, Angela Roth, Enrique Guerrero, Catherine O'Brien, Erik Frisk, Donna Yanowski, Maria Treviño, Dena Gaydos and Steven and Linda van Heeckeren, who helped with hospitality this past season.

Your warmth, time, and effort made every meeting feel extra special!

Lavender love,
Ro



Sharing Your Love for Herbs

Virginia Camerlo

The South Texas Unit may have an exciting opportunity to enter into an annual partnership with the Hermann Park Conservancy beginning fall 2026. This commitment involves maintaining one or more raised herb beds in the Family Garden that is located adjacent to the Cherie Flores Pavilion in McGovern Centennial Gardens at Hermann Park. In order to keep the beds maintained and interact with the public, STU would be expected to be present in the garden on a weekly basis (e.g. every Monday morning at 9am; and 3rd Saturday at 9 am). If gardening and sharing your love for herbs with guests in a world class park interests you, please use [this link](#) to fill out an interest form. Ideally, we will have enough volunteers to rotate through the weeks and seasons. Contact **Virginia Camerlo** with your questions at camerlocan@gmail.com.

More info to follow during the coming months!

NEW from THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA

2026 HSA Mission and Vision Statements, as announced at the 2026 Annual Meeting are new and now listed on the HSA website. You can also read or download the 2026 Annual Report from the Member's Only Portal of the HSA website.

Mission

The Herb Society of America educates and inspires people to explore the wonder and pleasure of herbs.

Vision

The Herb Society of America is a trusted expert resource on herbs – bringing people together to explore, share, and use the power of herbs to build healthier communities and a more sustainable world.



CONGRATULATIONS!



Virginia Camerlo (left) is our new STU Treasurer, taking the place of Maria Treviño, who has served as Treasurer for the past six years.

We appreciate both of you!



ANNOUNCING OUR JULY LAGNIAPPE



Even if you can't travel to France this summer, you can still celebrate French food, culture, and friendship right here in Houston.

**Join other STU members and guests for Bastille Day, the national holiday of France, at Alliance Française de Houston —
427 Lovett Boulevard, Houston, TX 77006.**

**Enjoy children's activities, photo booth experiences, French food & desserts, wine, beer & cocktail bars, live music & entertainment, dancing, community activities & more!
Both indoor and outdoor activities.**

**Entrance is free but you must have a reservation. If you would like one of the ten tickets I have reserved, let me know.
karen.herbsociety@gmail.com Or reserve your own tickets at
<https://www.alliancehouston.org/event-rsvp/bastille-day-2026/>**



An Introduction to *Prunella vulgaris* (Self Heal)

Ro Jones

One of our beloved members, **Jimmie Keddle**, planted self heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and shared it with us at our last meeting. I remember my first encounter with self heal at Thorn & Moon Market in the Houston Heights. At the time, I didn't know much about the herb—I was just drawn to its charming name.

Self heal has a long history of use in herbal traditions throughout Europe, Asia, and North America. Herbalist **Matthew Wood** notes the plant's mucilaginous nature and discusses its traditional use as a fresh leaf poultice. Today, many herbalists appreciate self heal for its versatility and often include it in teas, infused oils, salves, and topical preparations.

3 Ways to Use Self Heal

Tea

Steep 1–2 teaspoons of dried self heal in 8 ounces of hot water for 10–15 minutes. Self heal blends well with herbs such as lemon balm, red clover, and violet for a pleasant herbal infusion.

Infusion for External Use or Gargle

A strong self heal infusion has traditionally been used as a mouth rinse, gargle, or external wash.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons dried self heal
- 2 cups water

Directions

1. Bring the water to a boil.
2. Pour over the dried self heal and cover.
3. Steep for 20–30 minutes.
4. Strain and allow the infusion to cool completely.

To use as a gargle, swish or gargle a small amount and spit out. For external use, apply the cooled infusion with a clean cloth or cotton pad. Store any unused portion in the refrigerator and use within 24–48 hours.

Fresh Poultice

Crush fresh leaves and flowering tops and apply directly to the desired area. Traditional herbalists and Indigenous communities have long included self heal in their practices for topical herbal care and wellness.

As always, herbs are best used with care and intention. The information provided here is for educational purposes and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.





Don't Miss our August Meeting "Herb Fair 2026 Kick-off"



Stephanie

Our next meeting is not until August 19, but it's never too early to start thinking about new herbal crafts, blends, jellies, and other goodies for Herb Fair 2026. Do you have a great idea for a garden ornament? Or maybe it's time to downsize or reorganize your library. Start now! Send your ideas or questions to [Stephanie Calloway](mailto:stephaniec621@gmail.com), Herb Fair Chair, at stephaniec621@gmail.com



In the good ole summer “thyme”



Look at what is blooming
at Westbury Community
Garden!



July 4th



America





53rd ANNUAL
HERB
FAIR

Saturday Nov. 7, 2026
9am - 2pm

THE SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
Proud member of
The Herb Society of America since 1968

Southside Place Clubhouse 3743 Garnet St., Houston, TX 77005



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

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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: *Vacant*
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*