

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLIX, NUMBER 8



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
AUGUST 2026

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

August 2026 Calendar

Aug 3, Mon 1:30-2:30 pm CDT
Virtual meeting

Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Special Interest Group - A newly formed group of HSA Members interested in learning how herbs support health and well-being, facilitated by **Beth Schreibman Gehring**. Contact Karen at karen.herbssociety@gmail.com to receive reminder and link to meeting. Further information on p.5.

Aug 8, Sat. 8:00 am

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

Aug 9, Sun. 2:30 pm

August Lagniappe - A Private Guided Tour of Bayou Bend, coordinated by **Cynthia Card**, STU Member, and **Karen Cottingham**, STU Co-Vice Chair. Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens, 6003 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX., 77007. **Registration Closed.**

Aug 14, Tues.

No Day Meeting – Summer Break

Aug 19, Wed. 6:15pm
Members Only

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

September 2026 Calendar

Sept 8, Tues. 10 :00 am

Day Meeting - TBD

Sept 12, Sat. 8:00 am

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

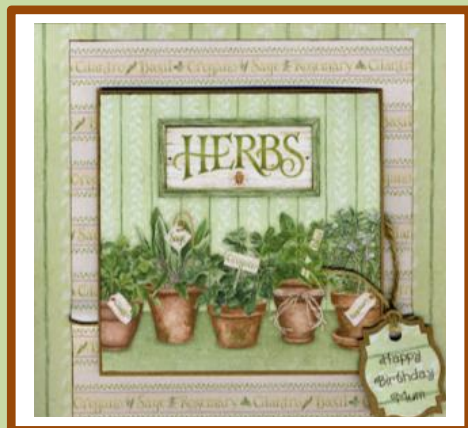
Sept 16, Wed. 6:15 pm

Evening Meeting: TBD - 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.

Sept 26, 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 (Sept co-editor is Linda Alderman)



Happy Birthday!!!

8/03 – Shelia Pruitt
8/05 – Rose Wherry
8/19 – Lucinda Kontos
8/24 – Enrique Guerrero
8/26 – Jimmie Keddie



What's in Your Harvest Basket?

Stephanie Calloway, Herb Fair Chair

As we prepare for an eventful August 19th Herb Fair kick-off meeting, please plan to **come with your hands full** – either with dried, labeled bags of herbs (see list of what we're looking for) or of books or gently used items for our Twice Found resale shop.

Last year we sold out of our tea blends, but we also sold less tea than we did in 2024 because we had less herbs contributed by members. Being able to feature locally grown herbs in our teas, culinary blends, and wellness products is a key feature of our Herb Fair and something that sets us apart from many other herb-based vendors and markets. Please help us keep this tradition strong by regularly harvesting herbs for our Herb Fair. As a reminder, we ask that you fully dry the herbs (you should have time to do this before August 19th if you're reading this before August 5th), remove them from the stems, and place them in a labeled Ziploc bag. The sooner we can get our member-grown herbs collected, the sooner our Committee Chairs can plan for what additional herbs (if any) need to be purchased to prepare for the event.

****Check out the STU website for a great article by Susan Wood on Harvesting, Drying, and Storing common herbs.****

As a reminder, the August 19th meeting will include opportunities to sign-up to volunteer in other ways to prepare for the event and ensure a successful fundraiser for the South Texas Unit. This Member-Only meeting is a critical opportunity to fulfill your commitment to our HSA Unit – I'm looking forward to seeing you there!

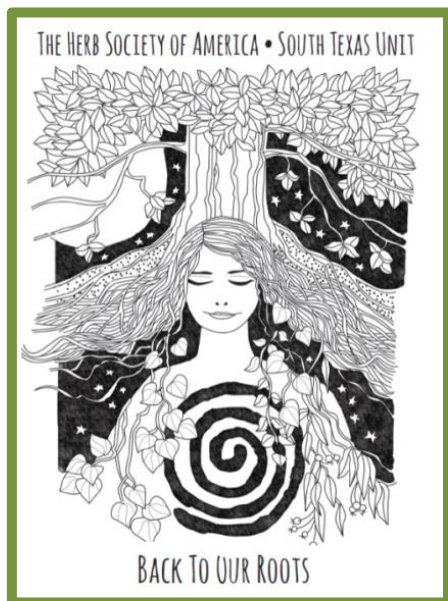
I will be meeting with the Committee Chairs in the coming weeks but have one important role left to fill: **Herbal Vinegar Chair**. If you are passionate about culinary herbs and would be willing to host a small group of HSA members at your house to prep the vinegars, please reach out to me at stephaniec621@gmail.com. Long-time Herbal Vinegar Chair Linda Alderman has graciously offered to mentor the incoming Chair and provide guidance and recipes. Thank you for your consideration and leadership!





Herbs Make Scents

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Back to Our Roots at the Westbury Garden

Westbury Workdays are
Saturdays at 8:00 am on the following days:

August 8 & 22 and September 12 & 26

It has been super hot lately, and we have been lucky to get a fair amount of rain. The garden is full of hot weather herbs and is doing very well. I got to take a class at Finca Tres Robles a couple of weeks ago about hydrating herbal beverages. A cold brew of mucilaginous, cooling herbs combined with herbs rich in minerals can provide hydration for these hot, hot summer garden days. I plan to serve some of these “new” tea blends at our workdays while it is so hot. Come on out to the next workday so you can try some.

Herb Fair

Make sure you read Stephanie Calloway’s Herb Fair article 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.

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 | |

The Herbs of Promise Program

Virginia and I attended the most recent Zoom Meeting for Herbs of Promise. Krystal Maxwell, leader of the project suggested that people may start using the basil for culinary purposes at any time



The basil in the WCG herb bed is ready to use, in fact, the Mrs. Burns’ is starting to bolt!! Come over anytime to harvest some of our Herbs of Promise!

Herbs Make Scents – August



Herbs Make Scents

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Here is the link to the ***Herbs of Promise Master Manual and Evaluation Kit***.

There is a section to use in evaluating recipes.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10plz4UFhP44D51pkoBffvZNLtUAOznX7/edit>

After you have made your recipe, you can use the appropriate portion of this Manual to record your observations. Hold on to your data for now, we will collate information from all the recipes at the end of the program. There are plans afoot to have a group tasting in October, but for now record your impressions of the herb's performance in recipes.

Looking forward to tasting what everyone makes!!

Our own HSA is a wonderful source for recipes and information. The Herb of the Month blog post from June contains a link to the recipes on the HSA website.

<https://blog.herbsociety.org/herb-of-the-month/lemon-basil/>

Don't Miss our August 19 Meeting "Herb Fair 2026 Kick-off"



***No previous
experience
needed, but be
prepared
to have fun.***

***It's Kick-Off Time Again for
the Home Team
And Head Coach Stephanie
is busy shaking things up!***

Join the huddle! We'll be brainstorming ideas for new herbal crafts, blends, jellies, and other goodies for Herb Fair 2026. Maybe you like to bake, or garden, or craft. Create herbal blends, teas, sachets, or skin care products. Or organize, publicize, and help energize! There's a place on the team for everyone. Join us now and learn something new this year!





Herbs Make Scents

August 2026

A New Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Program

Prepared by: Karen Cottingham, Co-Vice Chair, STU

The HSA Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Special Interest Group has launched!

This monthly virtual conversation, facilitated by **Beth Schreibman Gehring**, is open to HSA members interested in herbs that can support health and well-being. I think that must include just about everyone!

The intention is to informally explore herbal traditions, current research, seasonal practices, and practical ways to bring herbs into our everyday lives. Safe and responsible use of herbs is at all times emphasized.

The Wellness Group had their first meeting on July 6, and discussed cooling herbs to beat the summer heat; syrups, cordials, and herb-infused honeys; fruit soups and herb smoothies.

These gatherings are intended to be conversational rather than lecture-based, and members are encouraged to share their experiences, favorite herbs, recipes, books, gardens, and questions. Platforms for communication among members between meetings are being explored.

Participants have included experienced herbalists, enthusiastic gardeners, healthcare professionals, and people who are just beginning to discover the world of herbs.

The Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Special Interest Group will meet virtually on the first Monday of each month from 2:30–3:30 p.m. Eastern Time. The next scheduled meeting is August 3, 1:30 p.m. Central Time.

If you are interested in attending, or need additional information, let me know at karen.herbociety@gmail.com. I can add you to the email communication list and you will receive email reminders, links, and call-in information for each meeting.

Please be aware that The Herb Society of America utilizes GoTo Meeting as their virtual meeting platform. See <https://meet.goto.com/install> if you need to install the free GoTo Meeting app.



An Introduction to Beth Schreibman Gehring, Facilitator of the New Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Program

Prepared by: Karen Cottingham, Co-Vice Chair, STU

Beth is an active member of The Herb Society of America and the Western Reserve Unit, where she brings her unique voice as “storyteller, herbalist, urban gardener, horsewoman, and fairy granny” to a huge audience eager to “make life feel rich, connected, and meaningful”.

She has contributed many beautiful essays to The Herb Society of America blog, with topics ranging from “Before Halloween, There Was Samhain” to her most recent, “My Life with Flax” (See <https://blog.herbociety.org/> for the entire library of Beth's blogs)

Beth has created table settings for numerous television shows, collects vintage perfume, and looks for the magic in her everyday environment.

That environment includes her kitchen garden, compost pile, and still room occupied by her small grandchild, three cats, a dog, several horses, and a flock of heirloom chickens. Inside, you are likely to find a pot simmering on the stove, candles flickering on the table, and a special, intentional homage to the season.

Her books include *Stirring the Senses: How to Fall Madly in Love with Your Life and Make Everyday a Day for Candles & Wine*, *Recipes for Wintering: Creating a Relaxing and Magical Sanctuary*, and *Returning Home for the Holidays: Recipes and Rituals for Hearth and Home*.

In addition to her Herb Society articles, I look forward to Beth's inspirational writing on her Forage & Gather Substack (<https://bethschreibmangehring.substack.com/>), where “her essays often weave folklore, seasonal traditions, and personal memory into practical and evocative explorations of food, gardens, herbs, and celebration.”

And I haven't even come close to describing all of Beth's talents and accomplishments. Nevertheless, I hope this brief introduction inspires you to join the HSA Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Special Interest Group.

MEMBER



If you know of a member who is ill, suffered a loss or could use some words of encouragement, OR has received good news and congratulations are in order, please contact **Donna Wheeler** at ddwheeler16@hotmail.com.

Donna is our Member Outreach Contact and will send a garden card when requested.

Stay Tuned!

The STU Board of Directors has been working to clarify language in the Bylaws regarding Membership application. The proposed language change will be emailed by **August 4th** and voted on at the members-only meeting on August 19th. Keep your eye on your inbox so you can come to the meeting prepared to discuss and vote on the proposal.



The Herb Society of America Requests Member Participation

Recently, The Herb Society of America (HSA) requested one more bit of information from its members regarding the HSA Directory. Read as follows,

"HSA maintains a member directory, which is password protected. HSA members have the option to be included in the HSA Directory to have their information shared with other HSA members.

Take Action Now to be included in the HSA directory, the member must indicate they would like to "opt-in" to the directory by 8/30/2. **Note: The HSA (national) member directory is different from the South Texas Unit (local) member directory.

Please notify Janice at janicehfreeman@comcast.net to "opt-in" to The Herb Society of America's member directory. I will collectively respond for our Unit.

HSA New Member Orientation

The HSA has also implemented a monthly New Member orientation program. The Membership Chair presents the orientation on the second Tuesday of each month at 2PM ET and again at 7PM ET on the same date. It's meant for new members (about 6 mos. - 1 year) but anyone wanting more information can attend. Sharon Hosch is the new HSA Membership Chair. On July 7 Sharon sent an email with details, but if you have any questions, please contact me. janicehfreeman@comcast.net

STU Membership Renewals and Volunteer Hours

Thank you for submitting your annual dues and volunteer hours. There are a few members we have not heard from, so if you can remind your herbal friends this would be a huge help.





Garden Donations Approved at 2026 STU Annual Members Business Meeting

Karen Cottingham, Co-Vice Chair

The following proposals were approved by majority vote of the STU members in attendance:

To support the **Houston Botanic Garden** with a \$1,500 donation for a Cultivator Giving Circle membership for 2026-27.

To support the **McAshan Herb Gardens** at Festival Institute in Round Top, TX, created by STU founder Madalene Hill with a \$1000 donation in memory of Madalene.

To support the **intern at The Herb Society of America's National Herb Garden** in Washington, D.C. with a donation of \$1,000.

To support our **members willing to serve on The Herb Society of America Board of Directors** by reimbursing in-person meeting travel expenses to EdCon for up to \$2,000 per year. This includes members volunteering for executive offices, and national committee chairs but not for district delegate which is reimbursed by our district.

To support the **STU Herb beds at Westbury Community Garden Herb beds** along with the Herbal Education program with a \$500 donation.

To support the **Hermann Park Conservancy** with a \$250 donation to be designated for use in the Family Garden.



The **HERB SOCIETY
of AMERICA**

Theresa Pasoni to Serve as South Central District Delegate

Karen Cottingham

Theresa Pasoni, member of the North Texas Unit, has been appointed to fill the unexpired position of South Central District Membership Delegate. Theresa is replacing Catherine O'Brien in this position.

Theresa served as a U.S. Army Nurse Corp (ANC) 1973-1981. Her nursing career also included teaching undergraduate and graduate nursing students, online and in person. She has held leadership positions in the Tarrant County Master Gardeners Association (TCMGA) and the Greater Fort Worth Herb Society (GFWHS) and has been a member of HSA since August 2022.

As District Delegate, she will support all district activities, keep us informed of district news, and will be our "contact person" to communicate any of our ideas and concerns to the board.

The South Central District consists of HSA units from Arkansas (Ozark Unit) and Texas (North Texas Unit, Pioneer Unit, Southeast Texas Unit, South Texas Unit, Texas Thyme Unit, The Hill Country Unit, San Antonio Unit).

District Gatherings featuring educational programs, demonstrations, and workshops, (and a little business) are offered every other year.

We wish to acknowledge and thank Catherine for her outstanding service as the previous South Central District Delegate.



Sip of the Season: Hibiscus Spearmint Lemonade

Nothing says summer quite like a tall glass of herbal lemonade. I've been drinking a lot of hibiscus tea this summer! I was inspired by a refreshing hibiscus drink from ChopnBlok in Montrose, and I've been experimenting with my own blends at home. Lately, I've been adding nettle, rose hips, chamomile and oat straw to my tea, but this simple recipe is one of my favorite ways to enjoy cooling herbs on a hot Texas day.

Why these herbs?

Hibiscus (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*): Known for its beautiful ruby-red color and tart, cranberry-like flavor, hibiscus is traditionally considered a cooling herb and is a refreshing choice during the warm summer months.

Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*): It's uplifting and refreshing!

Lemon (*Citrus limon*): Lemon brightens the blend with fresh acidity while complementing the floral notes of hibiscus.

Hibiscus Spearmint Lemonade

Ingredients:

4 cups water
¼ cup dried **hibiscus (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*)** calyces
2–3 sprigs fresh **spearmint (*Mentha spicata*)** (or 1 tablespoon dried)
Juice of 2 **lemons (*Citrus limon*)**
2–4 tablespoons honey or maple syrup (optional) – I prefer maple syrup
Ice
Lemon slices and fresh spearmint for garnish

Directions:

1. Bring the water to a gentle boil and remove from heat.
2. Add the hibiscus and spearmint. Cover and steep for 10–15 minutes.
3. Strain and allow the tea to cool.
4. Stir in the fresh lemon juice and sweetener, if desired.
5. Serve over ice and garnish with lemon slices and sprigs of fresh spearmint.

Herbal Tip: Freeze extra tea into ice cubes before adding them to your lemonade. They'll keep your drink cold without watering it down and make a beautiful addition to pitchers served at summer gatherings.

Sip Well & Sow Joy,
Ro



SAVE THE DATE

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: *Virginis Camerlo*

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*