

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLIX, NUMBER 9



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
SEPTEMBER 2026

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

September 2026 Calendar

Watch your email for the date and time

Wellness & Medicinal Herbs Special Interest Group (Virtual) - 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.

Sept 8, Tues. 10 :00 am
Open to the public

Day Meeting: *Oils for Herb Extractions - Cosmetic and Culinary* presented by **Ro Jones** and **Julie Fordes**. Location: The Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Bring your bag lunch to socialize following the program.

Sept 12, Sat. 8:00 am

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

Sept 16, Wed. 6:15 pm
Open to the public

Evening Meeting: *Herbal Skincare from the Garden* by **Stephanie Calloway**. 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

October 2026 Calendar

Oct 10, Sat. 8:00 am

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

Oct 13, Tues. 10 :00 am
Open to the public

Day Meeting: *Lemon Basil Taste Test* presented by **Julie Fordes** and **Benée Curtis**. Location: The Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Bring your bag lunch to socialize following the program. For those interested, the book group will be a meeting during the lunch social to discuss *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden* by Camille Dungy (336 pp)

Oct 21, Wed. 6:15 pm
Open to the public

Evening Meeting: *A Tea Master's Introduction to Matcha* presented by **Kim McHugh**, Certified Tea Blending Master and Founder of True Leaf Tea Company. 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.

Oct 24, 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 (Oct co-editor is Janice Freeman)



September Happy Birthday wishes go to...

9/02 Steven van Heeckeren
9/14 Janice Freeman

9/15 Gayle McAdoo
9/27 Kay Challa



Chairman's Corner

CONGRATULATIONS!!!



To Our New STU Chair,
RO JONES!!

As some of you may know, there's a new Unit Chair! I want to thank you all for trusting the process, encouraging and empowering me behind the scenes, and for the continued support from our amazing STU members.

For those of y'all who want to know a little more about me, I'm a mama of two homeschooled kiddos, I run a homeschool collective, and I'm a mental health therapist, doula, Girl Scout Troop Leader, and community herbalist.

I am fascinated by both the **art and science of herbalism** and am currently studying to become a clinical herbalist. I enjoy learning about the phytochemistry of and research on plants, as well as creating tonics, tinctures, and herbal oil infusions in the traditional way. Some of my favorite Herb Society things are the lagniappes, our programs, learning about gardening, and—of course—creating and concocting things with **Julie Fordes!**

Outside of herbs, I love kayaking, being in nature, skating, dancing, educating, and volunteering. I'm excited about the year ahead and grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Unit Chair!

I would love to have some "**Member Spotlights,**" so send me a photo of you and answer the following questions:

- 1) What's your favorite herb, and why?
- 2) What do you enjoy most about being a member of the South Texas Unit?
- 3) What's something about you that fellow members might be surprised to learn?

Updated Bylaws

The following updates to **Article III** were approved unanimously on August 19:

Article III.A. Any person interested in growing, using, or studying herbs may apply for membership in the Unit.

Article III.B. A membership application may be submitted after attending three Unit Day or Evening meetings within a period of 12 consecutive months.

Article III.C. Membership categories may include, but are not limited to: active, sustaining, affiliate, and honorary.

Article III.D. The total number of members, or members in any category, may be limited as determined by majority vote at the Unit Annual Meeting.

Hospitality + New Board Members

Please join us in giving a warm welcome to our newest Board members: **Virginia Camerlo**, who will serve as **Treasurer**, and **Cynthia Card**, who will lead our **Speakers Bureau**. We're excited to have them step into these roles and share their time, talents, and ideas with the Unit!

Thank you to both our incoming executive board and committee chairs for helping keep our **South Texas Unit** growing, learning, and thriving!

Ro Jones
Unit Chair



Announcing Our Meetings

Day Meetings

September 8: *Oils for Herb Extractions - Cosmetic and Culinary* presented by **Ro Jones** and Julie Fordes

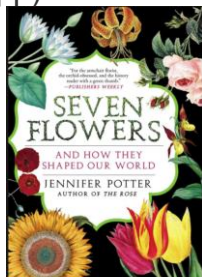
October 13: *Lemon Basil Taste Test* presented by **Julie Fordes** and **Benée Curtis**

The Day Group will have Book Discussions again this year after selected meetings. The three books selected are:

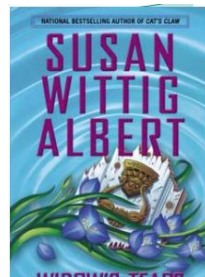
October 13, 2026 *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden* by Camille Dungy (336 pp)



February 13, 2027 *Seven Flowers and How They Shaped the World* by Jennifer Potter (304 pp)



May 11, 2027 *Widow's Tears* by Susan Wittig Albert (300 pp)



Evening Meetings

September 16: *Herbal Skincare from the Garden* by **Stephanie Calloway**

October 21: *A Tea Master's Introduction to Matcha* presented by **Kim McHugh**

October Evening Meeting

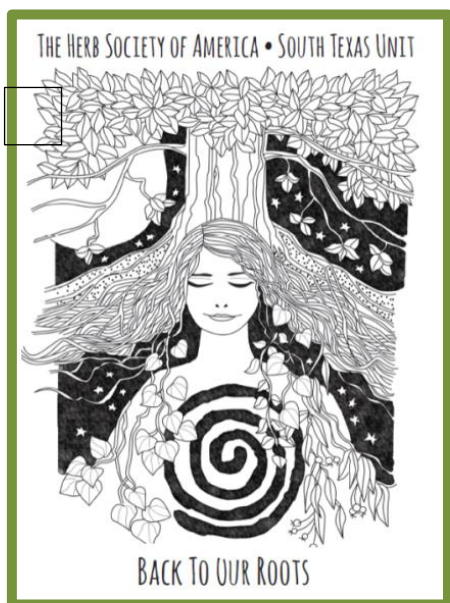


**A Tea Master's
Introduction to Matcha
By: Kim McHugh
Certified Tea Blending Master
Founder of True Leaf
Tea Company**



Herbs Make Scents

September 2026



Back to Our Roots at Westbury Garden

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

September 12 & 26

October 10 & 24



This past Saturday, the herb beds got a bit of TLC from members of the Herb Society and the Westbury Herb Committee. When we took this photo, it was only 82° and breezy!

Herb Fair Preparations



Preparations for the Herbal Marketplace have begun in earnest. Here we have the vinegar infusion for one of our new products last year, **Queen of Hungary Water**, a fantastic facial toner and so much more. What a beautiful combination of lemon balm, rose petals, calendula, elderflower and lavender! Those jars look like they could be topped off with some more vinegar! After the herbs are all submerged, we will wait 6-8 weeks, decant, combine with witch hazel or

hydrosol, and voila! Queen of Hungary Water!!! Read more about it on the STU website.... Go to the Herb Fair section and click on the green button for Queen of Hungary.

Herbs we still need for tea blends

We have enough lemon verbena, no need to bring any more. In addition to the dehydrated **citrus rounds** and **citrus zest**, we still need dried **rosemary**, **Mexican mint marigold**, **red stem apple mint**, **roselle** (may not be flowering yet), **holy basil**, **rose petals**, **peppermint**, and **spearmint**.

Herbs Make Scents – September



The Herbs of Promise Program



[lemon basil-poke cake](#)

Our lemon basil has done extremely well in the Westbury Garden. I have recently pruned off the seedpods and the top layer of leaves to get new growth that isn't bitter. I am sure that all the members who took plants home to their personal gardens have mature plants ready to harvest as well.

They are ready to use in teas, salads, dressings and marinades as well as sweets. If you don't have any plants at home, please come anytime and harvest the herbs in the Westbury bed. I will also be bringing dried and possibly fresh lemon basil to the next round of meetings. Here is a lemon basil cake recipe that uses **fresh** lemon basil. It was sent out by Krystal Maxwell, the leader for Herbs of Promise. Can't wait to taste this!

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 Petals* |
| ☐ Blue Butterfly Pea | ☐ Elderberry flowers and berries | ☐ Roselle* |
| ☐ Basil (Holy)* | ☐ Lemon Balm | ☐ Rosemary* |
| ☐ Calendula | ☐ Lemongrass | ☐ Sage |
| ☐ Chamomile | ☐ Lemon Verbena | ☐ Spearmint* |
| ☐ Comfrey | ☐ Mexican Mint Marigold* | ☐ Thyme |
| | ☐ Peppermint* | ☐ Yarrow |





Successful Herb Fair Kickoff!

Stephanie Calloway, Herb Fair Chair

On August 19th, the Cherie Flores Pavilion was buzzing with energy as 27 STU-HSA members gathered for our annual Herb Fair Kickoff meeting. This year marks the 53rd anniversary of our largest fundraising event and my third year as Herb Fair Chair. In addition to sharing exciting updates and key volunteer opportunities for members, we discussed ways that STU friends and family can support the event as well.

If you are a **non-member** who is passionate about herbal education and supporting community engagement, please contact me at stephaniec621@gmail.com to find out how you can support the event. We have a variety of opportunities including a need for volunteers who can help us:

Unload and Set-up on:

Friday, **November 6th** from 8:30 am-1:00 pm

Many jobs available to help us with:

Saturday, **November 7th** (day of the Fair) from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

If you've thought about getting involved in the South Texas Unit, this is a great way to connect, meet current members, and support our organization. If you know of college or high school students looking for volunteer hours, please send them my way as well. Many hands make light work!

If you are an **STU member**, check your inbox for an email from me with additional opportunities to help ahead of the event including weekend workshops in October and early November. We are still looking for more baked goods, crafters, and harvesters who can contribute dried herbs and craft materials ahead of the event.

Finally, I'm looking forward to sharing some of my EdCon learning at the September evening meeting where we will all contribute to preparing lip balms and bug bite sticks for the Herb Fair. That meeting is open to the public and we'd love to have you! See the calendar in this newsletter for more information.





STU Members Tour Bayou Bend



Karen



Angela Cynthia



The docent-led tour, arranged by Karen Cottingham, STU Co-Vice Chair, and Cynthia Card, STU Member and Bayou Bend Docent, attracted 40 STU members and interested guests.



Herbs Make Scents

September 2026



Debbie W. Mary N.



Virginia & Rion



Rose Terry Mary S.



We sincerely appreciate the time, expertise, and enthusiasm of all of the Bayou Bend docents. It was truly a lovely introduction to Miss Ima Hogg's legacy.





Herbs Make Scents

September 2026

The STU has recently become a Member Garden Club of The Houston Federation of Garden Clubs



All STU Members are encouraged to attend HFGC monthly meetings, held September through May at Saint Philip Presbyterian Church, 4807 San Felipe St. Enjoy refreshments and socializing at 10:00 am, followed by the meeting from 10:20 - 12:00 noon.

The September Meeting topic is "Daylilies 101".
For further information see <https://www.houstonfederationgardenclubs.org/>

The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA

Did you know HSA hosts fiction and non-fiction book studies?

Book Club #1 – 2026 selections

September 8: *Botanist's Guide to Tradition and Treachery* by Kate Khavari

October 13: *Radical Prunings: Novel of Officious Advice from the Contessa of Compost* by Bonnie Thomas Abbott

November 10: *A Spell for Trouble: An Enchanted Bay Mystery* by Esme Addison

December 8: *Last of the Moon Girls* by Barbara Davis

For more info and times of meetings go to:

[HSA Bookclub](#)

The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA

Did you know HSA offers an herb study group?

2026 Topics

October – 10/5/26 – Aging Well with Herbs – Cindy Christ, Facilitator

November – 11/2/26 – Herbs of Shakespeare – Diane Galvan, Facilitator

December – 12/7/26 – British High Tea (with Herbs) – Diane Galvan, Facilitator

For more info and times of meetings go to: [HSA Book Clubs](#)



To get reimbursed:

1. Save your receipts.
2. Download and complete the reimbursement form from the STU website.
3. Submit request via email or mail to Virginia Camerlo, Treasurer by December 1st.

** Please give Virginia a heads up if you are planning to spend more than \$200.





The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA



Butterfly Pea
Flower

Clitoria ternatea

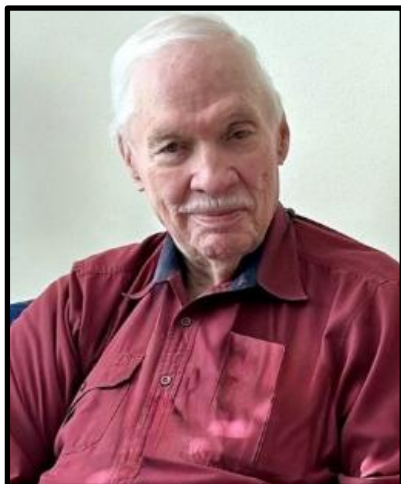
Tips for Using Butterfly Pea Flower:

- Fresh or dried flowers can be infused in liquid to yield a deep blue color. The pH will cause color change—acid like lemon or lime juice will turn it purple to pink. Raising the pH with an alkaline such as saffron will turn it green.
- The flavor of butterfly pea flower tea is very mild. It pairs well with lemon herbs, mint, chamomile, fruit and many other flavors.
- Make ice cubes of lemon or lime juice or prepared lemonade to add to initiate color change in butterfly pea flower infusions.
- Freeze the deep blue infusion in ice cubes to add to beverages and smoothies.
- Harvest flowers, dry them on screens and store in an airtight container.
- Butterfly Pea Flower powder is sold commercially.
- A simple tea is butterfly pea flower, lemon and honey.

Growing Butterfly Pea Flower:

This vine prefers to grow in well-drained soil and full sun (6-8 hours) in warm climates. It is a perennial in zones 9-11 and grown as an annual in other climates. It grows up to 15 feet tall. The flower is a vivid deep blue to violet color with light yellow and white markings in the center.





Rosemary for Remembrance



Rexford Howard Talbert December 11, 2033 – August 24, 2026

Rex was a founding member in 1968 along with Madalene Hill of The South Texas Unit, and our first Unit Chair. He was recognized by The Herb Society of America with the Nancy Putnam Howard Award for Excellence in Horticulture in 1993. I was privileged to know Rex since 1969 as he was an exceedingly generous source of botanical information (and puns) for all of us. The following is from his obituary just received.

Rexford Howard Talbert, 92, passed away peacefully August 24, 2026, in Williamsburg, VA. Born December 11, 1933, in Russell County, Virginia, Rex lived a life defined by an extraordinary curiosity about the world and a lifelong desire to understand it. A graduate of Virginia Tech's engineering program, he began his aerospace career with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) before the creation of NASA and went on to spend three decades working in America's manned space program, including the Mercury and Apollo eras.

His interests reached far beyond engineering. He played minor league baseball, loved classical music and sports, and became a nationally recognized authority on herbs, particularly thyme and oregano. A longtime leader in the Herb Society of America, he wrote, lectured, researched, and cultivated hundreds of varieties of herbs. Even late in life, his curiosity remained undiminished. He collaborated with botanist Dr. Arthur O. Tucker on published research examining the mysterious Voynich Manuscript.

Rex was, in the truest sense, a Renaissance man. An engineer, researcher, horticulturist, author, athlete and lifelong student, he never seemed to run out of things he wanted to learn. His interests could take him from spacecraft systems to an obscure species of thyme, from baseball to classical music, and he brought the same enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity to all of them.

Most importantly, he was also a loving father and devoted friend. He is survived by his daughter, Jennifer Adcock (Phil), and his son, Michael Talbert, extended family, and dear friends. More than any individual accomplishment, Rex leaves behind the example of a life spent remaining curious, learning, questioning, growing, discovering and sharing what he learned with others. He will always be remembered and missed.

No public services are planned. Rex's final resting place is, most appropriately, in the Memorial Garden at Cedar Grove Cemetery in Williamsburg, Virginia. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Rex's name to The Herb Society of America of which he was a lifetime member. The Herb Society of America educates and inspires people to explore the wonder and pleasure of herbs.

Submitted by Susan Gail Wood



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 poster features a central green square containing the event title and date. Above the square is a green banner with 'SAVE THE DATE'. The entire central content is surrounded by various botanical illustrations, including green leaves, purple basil, and yellow flowers. The background is white with a dotted border, and the entire poster is framed by a thick green border.



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: *Ro Jones*
Vice Chair: *Karen Cottingham*
Secretary: *Stephanie Calloway*
Treasurer: *Virginia 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: *Cynthia Card*