

South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America 2021-2022 Report from Officers and Committee Chairs Annual Meeting June 2022

Secretary's Report

We had 5 board meetings: 2021: May, July, September, November. 2022: February.
Board members presented on topics designated by an agenda, minutes were taken and approved following each meeting.

Submitted by Dena Yanowski

Treasurer's Report

May 23, 2022

During the past year, I completed the administrative and business tasks required as Treasurer to support the South Texas Unit. These tasks included submission of the membership reports and dues payments to The Herb Society of America and the filing the required reports for the IRS and Texas State Sales Tax. Payments to maintain STU business were made to the US Post Office, Big Tex Storage, And Cincinnati Insurance.

Due to Covid-19 STU events, Herb Day was cancelled before any pre-payments were made. Herb Fair was held as scheduled. The contract and payment to Cherie Flores Pavilion for the STU meetings were paid to the facility as we began holding in-person meetings.

This year the income collected was from Membership Dues, Herb Fair and Investment Dividends. Expenditures paid included those noted above and approved donations for scholarships, gardens, and the National Herb Garden Intern fund. All income and expenses are summarized in the financial report for 2021-2022.

A draft budget for the 2022-2023 was prepared, presented to the Board for their input, review and approval, and is now presented to the Unit membership for input, review, and approval. Reports prepared during the year included the Membership and Dues Report, Quarterly Financial Reports and the Annual Financial Report.

As Treasurer, I monitored daily transactions, reviewed, and reconciled monthly statements from Chase Checking Account and the quarterly statements from Vanguard Investment Funds.

I also shared membership data with membership chair. I collected the mail delivered to our Unit's PO Box and processed/transmitted mail to appropriate persons.

Overview Status and Trends:

The STU currently has a satisfactory financial status, especially considering the lack of revenue from Herb Day. To date, the 2022 general operating expenses exceed income by \$7,573. There are still a few expenses to be paid. STU has \$140,084 in the combined bank and investment accounts.

In 2022, three scholarships were awarded, and at least two scholarships have been budgeted for the 2022-23 year in anticipation of a good return from Herb Day. The investment dividends may be lower due to a volatile market. Current economic trends and meeting expectations will have an impact on our Unit's fundraising and activities. The expectation of offering the STU events promises for better outlook; however, careful monitoring of planned spending will be needed.

Submitted by Maria Trevino

Membership – *unavailable at this time*

Publications (MailChimp and Newsletter)

The South Texas Unit newsletter, *Herbs Make Scents* is a monthly publication distributed to an on-line audience of 1202 subscribers. In addition, we have 5 off-line mail readers. Two editors share responsibilities of composing the monthly newsletter and distributing it through the communication platform, MailChimp. The primary author submits a monthly article and additional articles are submitted by voluntary authors throughout the year. Several new sections were added to the newsletter: Monthly Lagniappe Event Announcements, Monthly Full Moon Zoom Announcements, Book Review and Monthly To-Do Lists. A total of 67 messages were created and sent to subscribers using MailChimp. The messages included the monthly newsletter announcements, monthly meeting and event announcements, and “members only” communications. Additional unit business messages were sent using a personal email distribution list and are not included in the above total.

Submitted by Janice Freeman

Vice Chair/Programs

Evening Meetings

August 18, 2021 **“A Members Only Herbal Happy Hour - Let the Good Thymes Roll!”**
Hosted by **The HSA-STU Board**

September 15, 2021 **“Hildegard of Bingen - The Holy Healer”**
Presented by **Adrian Melissinos, RN, PhD** via Zoom

October 20, 2021 **“Branching Out - What’s That Herb and Why Should I Plant It?”**
Presented by **Tricia Bradbury, Fort Bend County Master Gardener and Coastal Prairie Texas Master Naturalist** via Zoom. Tricia has since become an **HSA-STU Member**.

November 17, 2021 **“Create Your Own Herbal Smoke Bundle - A Make-and-Take Demonstration”**
Presented by **HSA-STU Member Karen Cottingham**

January 19, 2022 **“Brigid of Kildare - Goddess, Saint, and Holy Woman”**
Presented by **Professor Jonathan Ó Néill, Assistant Director of Irish Studies, University of St. Thomas** via Zoom

February 16, 2022 **“Mushrooms - The Third Life Form; Identification and Usage”**
Presented by **Mark “Merriwether” Vorderbruggen, Ph.D.** In-Person and via Zoom.

March 16, 2022 **“Citrus Problems – What’s Wrong with My Citrus Plant”**
Presented by **HSA-STU Member Janis Teas**

April 20, 2022 **“The Use of Medicinal Herbs in Pre-Hispanic and Traditional Mexican Medicine”**
Presented by **Liliana Cracraft, MPH, DrPH (Doctor in Public Health)**

May 18, 2022 **“Southern Grown Herbal Tea Blends”**
Presented by **Kim McHugh, Certified Tea Specialist, Tea Blending Master**

June 15, 2022 **HSA-STU Annual Members Meeting** via Zoom

July 20, 2022 ***“Plant Medicine of the Gullah Geechee People of South Carolina”***

Presented via Zoom by two of the featured speakers at the HSA Annual Meeting in Charleston - **botanist, forager, musician, and filmmaker Celie Dailey, and anthropologist Faith Mitchell, the author of “Hoodoo Medicine”**

* In-Person unless otherwise specified

Lagniappe - “Something Extra” - Activities

In 2022, we added an informal daytime activity on a Saturday or Sunday each month. These additional activities have allowed us to greatly expand our educational outreach and to accommodate members finding it difficult to attend Evening Meetings. A “lagniappe” is an extra or unexpected benefit, a gift of a “little extra something”. The custom of giving a lagniappe is widely practiced in the French Creole parts of Louisiana.

Our monthly Lagniappes have been very popular and will be continued indefinitely.

January 30, 2022 ***“Celebrate Imbolc and St. Brigid’s Day by Making St. Brigid’s Crosses”***

Led by **HSA-STU Members Julie Fordes and Karen Cottingham** at the **Westbury Community Garden Pavilion**

February 27, 2022 ***“Field Trip to Lone Star Mushrooms”***

A lecture and tour by **Michael Frederick** at **Lone Star Mushrooms** in Tomball, Tx.

April 24, 2022 ***“We’re Singin’ the Blues”***

A **Cyanotype Workshop** at the home of **Caroline Roberts, Cyanotype Artist**

May 21, 2022 ***“The Joys of Backyard Bee-keeping”***

A demonstration and lecture in the backyard of **HSA-STU Member Maria Treviño and Donald Burger**

June 21, 2022 ***“Herbs for the Summer Solstice”***

Led by **HSA-STU Members Julie Fordes and Karen Cottingham** at the **Westbury Community Garden Pavilion**

June 25, 2022 ***“The Comfort of Chai - Warm, Spicy, and Healing”***

Led by **Ayurvedic practitioner Asal Shokati** at the home of **HSA-STU Member Elizabeth Grandich**

Submitted by Karen Cottingham

Day Meeting

The Day Section had a short but successful 2021-22. We met several times to work on crafts for the Herb Fair sale. We also had four programs: one Holiday lunch donating toys to charity, one on Citrus growing, one to make a Valentine wreath and one and natural dyes for Easter eggs.

Submitted by Janice Dana

2022 Herb Fair Report

The 47th Annual South Texas Unit Herb Fair was held at a new location this year, the Southside Place Clubhouse. The event took place on Saturday, November 6, 2021 from 9-3. Members set up the day before. A decision was made not to use two available smaller rooms due to poor ventilation (Covid precaution). The kitchen offered a nice area for working members to enjoy a snack and lunch. The Clubhouse also offered a lovely outdoor area, herbs and plants were set up on tables inside and brought outside the morning of the fair. Bake goods and a new fundraiser, a "Tag Sale" were also set up outside.

The Herb Fair Committee Chairs and their committee volunteers did a tremendous job marketing, planning, making crafts, baked goods, fragrance items, soaps, herb jelly and tea. We made and sold wooden herb drying racks again this year and added wood flower presses, all sold. New items included decorative note cards and envelopes with photos of members gardens, dried bean soup mix with seasoning packets and honey a member donated. Another new craft that sold well were garden inspired stepping stones. A Christmas tree was set up in the middle of the room with handmade ornaments hanging from the branches. A homeowner from the neighborhood shared information about their community garden and our South Texas Herb Society members shared information about the herbs we were selling including planting tips with attendees. Butterfly Pea flower, a favorite tea was demonstrated and available at the tea table and the education table provided a hands-on activity from herbs collected ahead of time. Fair attendees had the opportunity to create and learn about Herbal Smoke Bundles at the table.

There were some changes this year. Additional herbs and plants were ordered due to the undersupply at the previous herb fair. New attendees were observed this year, possibly due to the change in location. The marketing campaign was successful in connecting neighboring homeowners with the fair. Due to the new location and space concerns, we did not include vendors. This was an experimental year, Covid concerns created challenges, an inability to meet in person for planning meetings, and a new location. Despite these challenges, revenues from the fair exceeded that of the previous herb fair. We felt that the new location was well-received by both members and attendees and that the fair was a financial and organizational success.

Submitted by Donna Wheeler

Education

Speaker's Bureau

1. The Herb of the Month articles (Jan-Dec 2021) have migrated to "Full Moon Ramble" under the oversight of Laura Mullen and Nichole Buegers.
2. March 10, Janice Freeman presented "Anything Herbs – Past, Present and Future" for the LaPorte -Bayshore Garden Club. She was joined by STU members Donna Yanowski and Dena Yanowski. Rosie Haas, Club Program Coordinator, and twenty club members attended the presentation, which was followed by a lovely luncheon at the Garden of Eden Floral - Tea Room.
3. March 24, Catherine O'Brien spoke at the Country Village Women's Group on Mediterranean herbs. There were about 30 women in attendance. Catherine demonstrated how to transplant basil that she had rooted in water, and gave away a jar of Italian Seasoning, made from a blend of her dried Mediterranean herbs. A delightful evening was had by all.
4. During the pandemic last year, Karen Cottingham kept people entertained as she presented "Growing Herbs for Use, Insight, and Delight" to Urban Harvest and to the Houston Urban Gardeners, and she presented "Herbs in the Headlines: Notable Women in the Plant Science"

at last year's Annual Meeting of HSA. We have begun to develop a short list of topics on which we can speak to ladies or gardening groups.

5. April 14, Virginia Camerlo and Susan Wood traveled to Brenham, TX for the Pioneer Unit meeting featuring Susan as guest speaker. In addition to her PPT presentation and extensive display, Susan prepared a special "Pioneer Potpourri" for all 47 members in attendance.

2022 Madalene Hill Scholarship Recipients

I would like to thank my committee of Janice Stuff, Angela Roth, and Deborah Lancaster for their hard work on reviewing applications, transcripts, letters of recommendation, and personal goal statements.

After reviewing application from 7 students (4 undergraduates, 3 graduate students), the scholarship committee is recommending \$1,000 each be awarded to the following students:

- Ganga Bhatt. Texas A&M University
- Lauren Decker, Texas A&M University
- Summer Brown, Amarillo College
- Two of the recipients attend university, and one attends a community college.

Submitted by Catherine O'Brien

Report from our Delegate to the Annual Meeting of Members in Charleston

Prepared by Karen Cottingham

May 8, 2022

Charleston Annual Meeting of Members Schedule

Thursday, April 28, 2022

1 – 5 p.m. Registration Opens

Check in at 3 p.m., Members on their own touring area sites, plantations, etc.

5 – 7 p.m. Opening Reception

Friday, April 29, 2022

7 -- 8:30 a.m. Breakfast is served; small committee meetings in break-outs 8 -- 5:30 p.m.

Registration and marketplace open

8 -- 9:00 a.m. Unit Chair and Member at Large meeting

9:15 -- 10: 45 a.m. Annual Meeting of Members

10:45 -- 11:15 a.m. Break Marketplace

11:15 a.m.--12:15 p.m. Presentation, Dr. Faith Mitchell, Hoodoo Medicine: Gullah

Herbal Remedies 12:30 -- 2:00 p.m. Luncheon and Awards Ceremony

2:00 -- 2:30 p.m. Break

2:30 -- 3:30 p.m. Presentation, Celie Dailey, Wild Foraging on the South Carolina Plain
3:45 -- 4:45 p.m. Presentation, Nathalie Dupree, Low Country Herbs and Southern Cooking
5:30 Marketplace closes, Raffles close
5 -- 6:00pm - District meetings
Farewell

SUMMARY OF EVENTS:

Thursday, April 28 5 pm -7 pm Opening Reception

This was a casual opportunity for socializing, snacking, and checking out the items for raffle. I enjoyed very pleasant conversations with Amy Schiavone, Maryann Readall, Lin Lange, Bill Varney, and Lois Sutton, along with many others.

I was very impressed with the quality of the raffle items - most were theme-oriented baskets donated by Units, individuals, or businesses. Raffle tickets were \$5 apiece - I don't know how much money was raised, but there was a steady line of people buying tickets. I have photos of many of the baskets if anyone is interested.

Friday, April 29 8 am - 9 am Unit Chairs Meeting

I attended the Unit Chairs Meeting on behalf of Unit Chair Julie Fordes, who was unable to attend. There were 21 members in attendance.

The discussion was moderated by Incoming President Lin Lange.

The major concern of the Unit Chairs was member apathy due to COVID. The word used was "languid". At the Board of Directors Meeting earlier in the week, Bill Varney had spoken very favorably of how the STU has been able to keep the ball rolling by shifting to virtual and other alternative programming. We have a very good reputation nationally, and many folks have appreciated being able to tune into our virtual programs. Maryann and Bill watched many of the programs, and Lin Lange watched our program on Hildegard. She was highly complimentary.

Based on her personal familiarity with our programs and the conversation we had had the night before at the Reception, Lin asked me to describe how we were adjusting our programming to get through COVID. I told the group about the Pearls for the Pandemic programs, that we're just getting back to in-person, and the new weekend activities we are offering.

There was a lot of interest in the topics for our programs and activities. I was asked to prepare a list from the past few years and send to Lin so she can distribute it.

People were also interested in how we publicize our events and meetings, and were surprised that we consistently have so many guests.

Some groups allow guests to attend three meetings and then they ask them to become members. It sounded like becoming a member at that point was required to be able to continue to attend programs.

It was suggested that a guest should be assigned a member "sponsor".

Other topics:

General agreement that Zoom is beneficial in many ways and is here to stay.

General agreement that local dues are too low.

Units were encouraged to ask their members to consider volunteering for committees, specifically membership committee, business membership committee, nominations committee, and awards committee.

I said I was interested in reading the Newsletters and Facebooks of other Units, but find it time consuming to try to figure out which Units have either or both. I was told that information is in an organized form on the website in the Member Section.

Some Units are looking into developing QR codes. This was brought up at the last minute and I'm not sure how these might be used.

9:15 am-10:45 am Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was mostly ceremonial in nature, with introductions of Officers, District Delegates, and Past Presidents; awards, acknowledgement of those members who passed away during the past year (Donna Fay Hilliard was not included in the list - we should find out why she was not included. Should we have done something?), various words of inspiration, reading of greetings from Past Presidents unable to attend, etc.

Of most significance, HSA member Laura Mullen was unanimously elected to serve as Treasurer!

The 2021 minutes and the financial report were approved. If I understood correctly, the financials have been audited for the past couple of years and no discrepancies have been noted.

Miscellaneous

The following is something that I observed in the HSA Annual Report that was sent electronically but not distributed as a handout. There is a lengthy list of individuals, Units, and businesses that made donations, either to general funds or restricted funds. I am wondering why the STU was not acknowledged as a donor when we are still sending generous donations as part of the 50th Anniversary pledge.

5 pm - 6 pm District Meeting

There were 11 members in attendance, 5 from the STU, 3 from Texas Thyme, 1 from the Southeast Unit, one a Member-at-Large from Austin, and District Delegate Bill Varney.

Bill reminded us of the following Upcoming Events and Deadlines:

The Fall District Gathering will be October 7-8, to coincide with the Ozark Folk Festival.

Bill would like information about Unit news/activities for the District Newsletter as soon as possible.

May 15 is the deadline for submissions to Herbal Bytes.

July 1 is the deadline for placing an ad in the Herbalist.

Five major topics were discussed:

1. There was a discussion about the privacy concerns of individual donors. In the past, a list of individual donors was distributed to all Annual Meeting attendees in printed form as a handout. This year, however, the donors were acknowledged by name in the electronic version of the Annual Meeting Report (see below). The decision to change from paper to electronic acknowledgement was apparently in response to concerns about privacy, legal issues, and at the request of several of the donors. Others felt that donors should be more prominently, rather than less prominently, acknowledged. Discussions regarding donor privacy and acknowledgement are still ongoing. It was suggested that in the future, a donor could be given the option of being identified or not. It was also suggested that rather than all donors being acknowledged in a category of "\$250 and above", there should be various categories so those who donate at a higher level can be acknowledged. Laura will address this issue of "donor delineation" in her new capacity as Treasurer.
2. Also in response to privacy concerns, personal information about members has been removed from the website. Bill stated that he can provide members with contact information for any other member if requested.
3. There was concern about the cost of providing Zoom access for members unable to attend. 38 members "attended" the Annual Business Meeting via Zoom this year.

The total cost for providing this service was \$6,000.00.

4. The importance of providing virtual access for members in general and especially

members-at-large was emphasized. I volunteered to reach out to the members-at-large in our district to see if they would like to receive our newsletter and news of

virtual activities they may be interested in.

5. Bill mentioned that donations to HSA can be either “restricted”, that is, specified for particular uses only, or “unrestricted”, to be allocated at the discretion of the Board where need is greatest. He urged us to consider “unrestricted” donations rather than specifying particular uses.

Miscellaneous Additional Information:

Annual Report to Members

Audit Reports

Annual Meeting of Members Agenda

Thank you for allowing me to represent the South Texas Unit at the 2022 Annual Meeting

In Memorium

Remembering Donna Fay Hilliard 1958-2021

Remembering Barbara Ownby 1934-2022

Remembering Betty Lancaster 1929-2022

Remembering Kathleen Ballanfant 1945-2022