

South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America 2022-2023 Report from Officers and Committee Chairs Annual Meeting May 2023

Unit Chair

Programs developed in the four years I have been chair include, Full Moon Ramble, Pearls for the Pandemic and Back to Our Roots. We now have a garden in the Westbury Community Gardens. We have had three Herb Fairs and one Herb Day which were all great. Our membership has stayed around 65 people with some fluctuation. We are able to fulfill requests for speakers more easily, now that we have an active Speaker's Bureau. None of this would have been accomplished without the members!

Submitted by Julie Fordes

Secretary

Took minutes at all Board Meetings and the Annual Meeting.

Submitted by Dena Yanowski

Treasurer

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

Membership during the 2022-23 year to date has gained 11 new members and our current membership enrollment is 82*. A Google Forms membership application on the website makes the membership application process more streamlined and user friendly. There is also a Members Information section on the website with protected access to an online Membership Directory.

Membership continues to submit hours by emailing totals to the membership chair at the end of June, and will be added up and submitted to National in August 2023. A new PowerPoint presentation was created to share with new members at the 2022 New Member Orientation on May 7.

Carolyn Kosclskey, Membership Chair

Membership Year July 1, 2022 – May 17, 2023

New Members: From July 1, 2022 through current date 11 new members were added to our roster (shown in order of application):

Joyce Wilkenfeld
Janice Russell
Humberto Figueroa
Steven van Heeckeren
Janet Starr
Stephanie Calloway
Michelle Moore
Kay Challa
Mary Starr
Susan Steinhardt
Debbie Gordon

Current membership enrollment as of May 17, 2023*

82 TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

6 Joint memberships

5 Life memberships

7 Sustaining memberships

3 Affiliate memberships

1 Honorary membership

TOTAL VOTING MEMBERSHIP

Majority = 71

2/3's = 47.3

Meeting quorum (20%) = 14.2

Application for Membership

As of 2021 persons interested in applying for membership have been able to access and complete the online Google form through the website. The membership chair is alerted by email when an online form is submitted and has access to that form on the website. If the applicant meets the main requirement of attending three meetings in the last year a welcome email is sent outlining the process for gaining membership. A summary of the completed application is then sent by email to the unit chair for review and final approval. Once the applicant has been approved the membership chair sends an email "welcome" letter to the applicant with information on how to submit their dues online. The unit chair also sends a welcome email to the applicant. Board members and chairs are notified that a new member has been approved and a

summary of their application is shared. Should an applicant not be approved an email is sent by the membership chair stating the reason(s).

New Member Orientation

A New Member Orientation potluck luncheon was held on Saturday mid-morning, May 7, 2022 at the Southside Place Clubhouse. The event was well attended, each member bringing a food item. At the beginning everyone was introduced and then invited to dine. Tables were tastefully decorated with dark green cloths and colorful spring bouquets put together by members. Origami flying geese and bundles of note cards with herb photographs, each made by members, were also on each table and served as favors. Following lunch attending board members and chairs introduced themselves and briefly told of their responsibilities. The last part of the program consisted of an informative PowerPoint presentation put together by unit chair Julie Fordes highlighting the different aspects of the unit, HSA and membership. At the end members formed groups and engaged in a friendly competition answering an "in house" herb quiz put together by the unit secretary Dena Yanowski and several other members.

*Based on membership displayed in the online Membership Directory.

Submitted by Caroline Kosclskey

Publications (MailChimp and Newsletter)

The South Texas Unit newsletter, *Herbs Make Scents* is a monthly publication distributed to an on-line audience of 1252 subscribers and 5 off-line mail readers. Two editors share responsibilities of composing and distributing the monthly newsletter. The monthly newsletter includes herb related articles and Unit business. Unit members provide the content.

MailChimp is the communication platform utilized to distribute a total of 84 messages (5/22-5/23) that were created and sent to the 1252 subscribers. In addition to the monthly newsletter, messages for the Day Group and Evening Meetings, Lagniappe Events, Members only communications, and Herb Day and Herb Fair Events are distributed.

Additional messages for Unit business is distributed using a personal email distribution list and are not included in the above total.

Submitted by Janice Freeman

Vice Chair/Programs

Evening Meetings

August 17, 2022 "Herb Fair 2022: Embracing Herbal Traditions and Spreading Herbal Knowledge"
Presented by Catherine O'Brien, HSA member and 2022 Herb Fair Chair

September 21, 2022 "Don't Treat Your Soil Like Dirt" Presented by Danny Wilson, Creator of Farm Dirt Compost

October 19, 2022 "Day of the Dead" Presented by Chrissie Dickerson Ramirez, owner of Casa Ramirez Folk Art Gallery

November 16, 2022 "The Art and Practice of Making Mandalas" Presented by Houston mandala artist Sarah Deuster.

January 18, 2023 "Stop and Smell the Coffee" Presented by Dean Borgerding and Savannah Childers of Boomtown Coffee

February 15, 2023 “To Have and to Hold - The Traditional Herbs of Marriage” Presented by STU member Karen Cottingham

March 22, 2023 “The Aromatherapy Medicine Chest” Presented by Fran Higgins, licensed massage therapist, licensed aesthetician, and certified aromatherapist.

April 19, 2023 “Inspiring the Next Generation – Introducing Herbs to Children” Presented by HSA member and educator, Angela Roth

May 17, 2023 Annual Meeting

June 21, 2023

LAGNIAPPE - “SOMETHING EXTRA” - ACTIVITIES

October 2, 2022 “The Magical World of Milk and Honey,” a cheese and honey tasting hosted by cheesemonger/beekeeper Nicole Buegers.

October 15, 2022 “A Trip to Farm Dirt Compost” hosted by Danny Wilson

January 15, 2023 “Experience a Traditional Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony” hosted by Gennet Kassa

January 28, 2023 “Field Trip to Boomtown Coffee Roastery”, hosted by Dean Borgerding and Savannah Childers

Submitted by Karen Cottingham

Day Meeting

Vision Planning Session for Day Meetings was held in August 2022 with recommendations:

- Program topics focused on herbs & herbal(Distributed on culinary; botanical/classification/growing; crafting/uses/other)
- Encourage member presentations of his/her research; a safe haven to discuss and share; foster personal growth in herbal scholarship; promote connection and commitment
- Change the perception of Day Meeting as being “The Craft Group”
- Promote more involvement and attendance of all members

Sept. 13 – Program – Introduction and demonstration of Origami, Presented by Cynthia Card.

Cynthia Card patiently and skillfully instructed the group on the folding and assembly of an Origami Crane. Members, practiced and enjoyed. Held at the home of Lois Jean Howard.

Oct 11 Program -- “Discussion of HSA Webinar: Breeding Better Herbs” presented by Janice Stuff.

Research article: Riccio, Peggy. Breeding Better Herbs. American Gardener Magazine. American Horticultural Society. March/April 2022, pages 30-34. Home of Janice Stuff.

Nov 8 Program “Bouquet Garni” presented by Janice Dana; followed by workshop for attendees to assemble a Bouquet Garni. Donna Wheeler prepared a soup with Bouquet Garni. Held at Cheri Flores Building.

Dec 13 Gift Exchange, Herbal Potluck and Toy Donation. Hostess Jane Littell lead the group in clever holiday games. Mary Nure organized an Herb Society effort to collect toys, and household items for Ukranian refugees. Mary Nure identified a HoustonUkranian refugee liaison; Mary delivered all items.

Based on a 10+ item category guideline of herbal research for a herb study group, the group thoroughly studied 3 different herbs. Each member or participant selected the topic she wanted to research and present (topic selected at least 1-2 weeks before the meetin, to give time for the

research). Donna Wheeler collected the individual report summaries and assembled them in a notebook. The sessions included tasting, seeds for growing and crafting uses.

Jan. 10 2023 Research topic: Chervil held at the home of Donna Wheeler

Feb. 8 Research topic: Salvia held at the Cherie Flores Pavilion

Mar 14 Research topic: Poliomenta Longiflora held at the Lott Building, Hermann Park

Apr 2023 No meeting. A craft meeting was held to prepare and label crafts for Herb Day.

May 9 Pesto program and demonstration given by Benee Curtis.

Summary. Day meeting members had a productive and interesting year as we recovered from Pandemic closures. The research study and demonstrations were well received and encouraged more participation. Attendance ranged from 15-20 participants. Guests and new members attended meetings and participated.

Submitted by Janice Stuff

2023 Herb Fair Report

There were lots of helpers and they were all personally thanked for their contributions.

- Bakery – Debbie Lancaster, Palma Sales, and lots of bakers
- Book sales – Laura Boston. Sweet Organic Solutions in Pearland donated six wooden crates and five bags of books from their shop to the Herb Fair. Laura Boston brought in 30 boxes of books and only had two left over to donate to a local library. There was a book in the silent auction that went for \$30.
- Cashier – Maria Treviño and her helpers
- Crafts – no chair, but lots of helpers
- Culinary Blends – Dena Yanowski with seven helpers
- Education table – Karen Cottingham
- Fragrances – Faith Strunk with four helpers
- Jelly – Benée Curtis with five helpers who made jelly. All of the jelly sold.
- Kitchen – Mary Sacilowski
- Plant Sales – Janis Teas, Jeanie Dunnhoo
- Pre-sales – Janice Stuff
- Publicity – Virginia Camerlo with two helpers
- Set up/Take down – Rose Wherry with eight helpers
- Tea Blends – Julie Fordes, with eight helpers

There were two vendors: Bee2Bee Honey and Texas A&M Agrilife Extension

Submitted by Catherine O'Brien

Speaker's Bureau

Karen Cottingham, Julie Fordes, Janice Freeman, Catherine O'Brien, Angela Roth, and Susan Wood spoke to nine different groups (Crosby Library, Enchanted Forest, Garden Divas, Grimes County Master Gardeners, Idylwood Garden Club, Kolter Elementary School, Old Braeswood Garden Club, Quail Valley Garden Club, Shepherd Park Garden Club, and Urban Harvest) about how to grow herbs, culinary and medicinal herbs, gifts of the magi, how to make butters, seasonings, potpourri, and teas.

Submitted by Catherine O'Brien

2023 Madalene Hill Scholarship Recipients

Scholarship applications were sent out to 50 institutions of higher education (i.e., community colleges, state colleges, and universities) that offer biology botany, horticulture, agribusiness, agricultural science, and environmental science. Four applications were received from West Texas A&M University, Tarleton State University, Midland College. There were three undergraduate applications and one graduate student application. Janice Stuff and Sara Diaz served on the Scholarship Committee to help review the applications.

Submitted by Catherine O'Brien

Report from our Delegate to the Annual Meeting of Members in Baton Rouge

Report from Baton Rouge 2023 EdCon Business Meeting

Next year, the conference will be held in Philadelphia. The business meeting will be separate from the conference and will be held on Zoom. The Treasurer, Laura Mullen, spoke about the need to upgrade the communication system for National. She would like units who want to donate to National not to designate the money for a specific use, but to give funds with unrestricted use.

Unit Leaders Meeting

Discussion centered around membership issues and retaining members once they join. Many units have very strict policies regarding new members, for example a 2-year probationary period. Some units take a more relaxed policy toward membership. Casey King, National Membership Chair, says that neither philosophy is right or wrong, units have autonomy, and should do what works for them.

Some units have difficulty finding people who will take on leadership positions in the unit. Casey King suggested that job sharing was an acceptable way to get more people involve in leadership roles.

South Central District Meeting

The group voted to sponsor Susan Wood's article in the upcoming issue of the Herbarist (\$300) and to give National \$1000 in unrestricted funds.

The group discussed how to stay in contact with each other more easily and Virginia Camerlo offered to compare ListServ, used by the Pioneer Unit, and Slack.

Julie Fordes, Angela Roth and Dianne Duperier offered to be on a committee with Bill Varney to work on hosting a South Central District get together in the fall.

Submitted by Julie Fordes