

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 4



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
APRIL 2019

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April 2019 Calendar

- Apr 9, Tues. at 10:00 am** **Day Meeting** is at the home of **Lois Jean Howard**. Members will gather for Herb Day workshop. RSVP to Lois Jean (832-969-8349).
Bring a dish to share.
- Apr 17, Wed. at 6:30 pm** **Evening Meeting** is at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004). The program, "Buds, Blossoms, and Blooms - Culinary Artistry with Edible Flowers" is presented by **Bee, the Flower Chef** at [Flora Cocina](#). Hosts: **Rose Wherry** and **Fatma Ozel**.
Bring your plate, cutlery, napkin and a dish to share.
- Apr 26, Fri. at 12:00-5:00** **Set-up for the Herb Day Symposium** is at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Fondren Hall (5501 Main Street, Houston, TX 77004).
- Apr 27, Sat. at 8:45-3:00** **36th Annual Herb Day ("Herbs from South of the Border") Luncheon and Symposium** is at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Fondren Hall (5501 Main Street, Houston, TX 77004). Members arrive by 8 am or as assigned. **Registrations MUST be received by April 24th.**

May 2019 Calendar

- May 14, Tues. at 10:00 am** **Day Meeting** is at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004). **Open to public.** The program, "Mexican Salvias," is presented by **Beth Murphy**. Host: **Linda van Heckeren**.
- May 14, Tues. at 7:00 pm** **Board Meeting** is at the home of **Donna Yanowski**. **Members Only.**
- May 15, Wed. at 6:30 pm** **Annual Meeting: Members only.**

Newsletter deadline: the 25th of every month

Members – If you would like to have your birthday remembered, and haven't seen it announced, send an email to Linda Alderman at ewalderman@comcast.net



Chairman's Corner

Greetings!

Pulling myself away from the backyard is getting easier as the temperatures are warming and the mosquitos are returning. Now that winter has passed, I don't mind the overcast days as much, but the cloud cover does keep the humidity right on top of us. Remember to take your phone into the garden and take pictures of what you are growing. We are all interested in what everyone else is doing and curious about other members gardens. Please send the pictures via email or text to member [Jenna Wallis](#) so that she may show them on the screen before our next evening meeting.

Sometime last spring **Dena Yanowski** brought me several Indigo seedlings that she acquired from **Graham Keegan** during his 2018 Indigo Tour through the United States. He is a textile designer in Los Angeles who works exclusively with natural dyes and advocates for the use of natural color by distributing dye plants, seeds, books and dyeing classes. The plants survived our winter and are growing and multiplying rapidly. Maybe a bit aggressively, but that is not a problem – so far. His 2019 Indigo Tour will bring him as close as Austin, if you are interested. www.grahamkeegan.com

The next HSA webinar will be Wednesday, April 24, 12 Noon, our time. The topic will be "Beyond Rosemary, Basil and Thyme," and presented by **Theresa Miesler** of Shady Acres Herb Farm in Minnesota. To register, go to www.herbsociety.org and on the home page, click on "Learn" and you will see webinars in the drop down column. They are offered each month and can be very informative and fun.

Enough talk and time to get back to work on our 36th Annual Herb Day. I trust that every member is doing his or her share of the preparation and advertising. Please register today, if you have not already done so and invite a friend!

Donna Yanowski
Unit Chair

Herb Day Speaker and Caterer
Featured in Houston PBS Video

Herb Day Speaker and Caterer, Ana Beaven, is featured in a Houston PBS Video "Houston Cookbook".




Click on the weblink listed below and start viewing at 7:30 minutes into the video to enjoy a 5 minute segment that features Anna.

The video is produced and narrated by another HoustonChef, David Cordua.

Click here [The Houston Cookbook](#)



Happy Birthday!

1 st Janice Dana		23 rd Thelma Rowe
		
	21 st Kathy McDaniel	



What's Happening in our Unit!



36th Annual Herb Day Preparations

I'm sure by now everyone's calendar has been marked for our Spring Herb Day event

"Herbs from South of the Border"

April 27, 8:45 a.m. until 3 p.m. at St. Paul's United Methodist Church. Things are falling into place perfectly thanks to those who are chairing the sub-committees and members finding ways to help with behind the scenes.

Refer to the full flyer later in the newsletter

This year's theme is "Herbs from South of the Border." The public is invited to come out, enjoy a light breakfast fare prepared by club members and a lunch catered by Cuchara, receive informative handouts, and listen to exciting speakers.

Speakers include—

- Bee, the Flower Chef at Flora Cocina: *Agua Frescas, Margaritas, and More - Mexican Beverages with an Herbal Twist*
- Ana Beaven, creator of Cuchara, Houston's Mexico City Bistro: *Mexican Herbs for Flavor, Flair, and Fire*
- Carlos Hernandez-Calderoni, Clinical Herbalist and Nutritionist: *Traditional Mexican Herbalism and Curanderismo*

Herb Day attendance is by pre-registration only (\$50 per person fee is all inclusive).

Registration Deadline: Registrations must be received on or before April 24, 2019.

Online registration and mail-in registration forms are available at <http://www.herbsociety-stu.org/herb-day.html> or email southtexasunit@gmail.com

Two easy ways for you to help prepare for Herb Day

1 Help With Refreshments

Dena Yanowski is asking for Herb Day refreshment volunteers. An email with recipes & sign-up opportunities has been sent. Now that you are ready to help, she has made it easy to sign up.

Simply click here [SignUpGenius](#).

You may email or call her with any questions.

Dena Yanowski
832-693-3630

#2 Help Make Products

Tuesday, April 9 at the home of Lois Jean Howard (RSVP 713-771-0172). Will make bay balls, bath salts and possibly tea. This is in place of the regular day meeting.

Saturday, April 13 10 am at the home of Julie Fordes (RSVP 832-969-8349). Will finish making items, price & label the items for sale & discuss display etc. Bring a little lunch with you.



Back to Our Roots

Janice Dana

This is the second in the series about growing, harvesting and using our own herbs. I want to encourage every member with a garden to grow this variety of mint for use in tea. **Red Stem Apple Mint** also known as Gingermint, Redmint, Scotchmint, Scotch Spearmint, Golden Apple Mint and Little-leaf Mint.

The South Texas Unit has been growing this mint for many years for use in our iconic teas. This variety was deemed a “Promising Plant” by the Herb Society of America. With chemistry from both spearmint and peppermint, it has a delicate, complex scent and flavor that makes it very useful in a variety of products. It is the mint of choice in Vietnamese cuisine.



It has now been renamed Double Mint
Mentha x gracilis
Madalene Hill.

This name honored Madalene for her work to spread its cultivation and use. It is a hybrid between *Mentha arvensis* and *Mentha spicata*. It is the only mint to have the oils of both.

The plants require rich soil and regular deep watering and lots of sun. If the plant turns pale it is probably overwatered or in too much shade. Plant from now until our hottest months. As with other mints, Double Mint is invasive. STU made the most of this by growing it in the ground to maximize the harvest. If allowed to flower, the blooms are white to pink. Flowers produce no seed but the plant can easily propagate from cuttings. Double Mint is subject to spittle bug that can be sprayed off with the hose.

Although fresh is best and sprigs keep for a few days in water, for the purpose of making our tea blends, the leaves can be air-dried in bunches or stripped from the stems and dried on paper. Right before flowering, cut the stems 1 inch from the ground. You can harvest one mint plant two or three times in one growing season. Be sure that the leaves are completely dry before storing in plastic bags. Any amount will be helpful in getting the amount needed for tea.

Red Stem Apple Mint





Congratulations!

South Texas Members to receive H.S.A. Membership Anniversary Pins

The following members will receive membership Anniversary Pins from
The Herb Society of America for their membership tenure in South Texas Unit
and The Herb Society of America. Congratulations!

Anniversary Member's

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>
-------------	-------------

15	Elayne Kouzounis
15	Martha Burg
25	Christine Z. Ankney (Rosemary Circle)
30	Janis Teas
30	Linda Alderman
30	Cathy Livingston
30	Sally Luna
30	Kathy McDaniel
40	Joan Jordan



The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA

Healing Herbal Tea Class

Thursday, April 11, 2019

6-8:30pm

\$95 per person (introductory price. NOTE: (50% off for Herb Society Members)

Please join Tea Master, Kim McHugh for this fun, informative and tasty event! We'll actually do tea blending, herb blending and tea tasting right there in class. A light dinner will be served! It's hands-on learning at it's best! No tea experience necessary to fully enjoy this class. We'll discuss what certain herbs and teas can do for your health and longevity based on what science is currently researching to get the results you're looking to enjoy. We'll demonstrate the EASIEST ways to incorporate this healthy trend into your lifestyle for the biggest, long term impact. Your BEST days of health and happiness are just ahead!!

This is the only time this class will be offered in 2019. This class is being picked up as an ITEI Masterclass (\$295 certification class) and will include much more in-depth information along with official ITEI certification for those who are continuing their professional tea education. Anyone who takes this class at the introductory price in 2019 will receive a \$95 discount on the official ITEI class in 2020.

This class has limited seating as we will need some space for blending and tasting and will sell out soon. We currently have 10 spots left! **Herb Society members will receive 50% OFF their tickets.** You may call the store at 713-218-6300 to purchase your ticket or purchase your ticket in the tea room. Yes, we do accept cash, checks or credit cards. All class materials are provided. We'll see you there!



What's Coming Up Next?

PASSIONATE ABOUT FLOWERS -
SUNSHINE, FOOD, AND MEDICINE FOR THE SOUL
by Karen Cottingham

*“Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful;
they are sunshine, food, and medicine for the soul”*

Luther Burbank (1849-1926)



As a man who spent his life with plants and flowers, Luther Burbank was unusually well-situated to observe the emotional responses that people have to flowers. Known as the “Plant Wizard”, he created over 800 new varieties of fruits, flowers, and vegetables during his long horticultural career. Burbank was also an artist and a dreamer – he spent over 17 years bringing to life an idealized memory of his favorite flower from childhood. By patiently cross-pollinating daisies from all over the world, he created what we now know as the Shasta daisy.

Although most famous for his pursuit of the perfect daisy, Burbank was passionate and endlessly curious about all flowers. On one memorable night, for example, he was walking among his calla lilies when he caught the sweet scent of violets. As a methodical horticulturalist, Burbank’s attention was immediately engaged - calla lilies at that time were “known” to have no scent. He dropped to his knees and began crawling around in the dark, smelling each flower until he discovered the source of the elusive fragrance. Burbank was a scientist, of course; but crawling in the dirt, he was also a man seduced by the sublime gift of unexpected fragrance. He later recaptured this experience by creating a sweet-smelling calla lily for all to enjoy.

Burbank clearly responded to flowers as both a scientist and a romantic. Only a person deeply passionate about flowers would spend 17 years on a daisy or crawl in the dark toward the siren song of a heavenly fragrance. Burbank said as much when he described the source of his horticultural inspirations: “The secret of improved plant breeding, apart from scientific knowledge, is love.”



The Shasta Daisy

By comparing this new flower with its parents, shown further on, it will be seen that in size, shape, color, grace, and even leaf and stem, a new race has been created. More than ever will this be appreciated when it is understood that the flowers of the Shasta often attain a diameter of eight inches.



"How do I love thee?"
Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth
and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being, and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quick need, by sun and candle-light;
I love thee freely as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with thy childhood's faith.
Robert Browning.

Luther Burbank with his beloved Shasta daisies

It seems that for Burbank, flowers truly were “medicine for the soul”. But what about his observation that “Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful”?



Recent research has actually shown that Luther Burbank was right - flowers *can* make us happy. They can also greatly enhance our emotional, social and cognitive well-being.

Decades after Burbank made his prescient comment, evolutionary psychologists and geneticists at Rutgers University studied the effect of flowers on human emotion and behavior. Not surprisingly, they found that flowers trigger happy emotions; but they also noted that flowers heighten feelings of life satisfaction and positively affect social behavior.

In the “Home Ecology of Flowers Study” Harvard University researchers found that flowers increase feelings of kindness and compassion, dissipate negative feelings, and increase energy, happiness, and enthusiasm.

And for our senior citizens, the Harvard psychologists concluded that flowers reduce depression, promote social networking and help maintain memory functions as people age.

Flowers in the workplace have remarkably beneficial effects. Researchers at Texas A&M University concluded that idea generation, creative performance, and problem solving skills all improve significantly when the workplace environment includes flowers and plants.

A non-technical way to express these research results would be to say that flowers have the amazing ability to nourish body, mind, and soul.

Bee Holleran, the Flower Chef, caterer, and creator of Houston’s *Flora Cocina*, puts it this way: “The more I learn about edible flowers, the more I feel confident that we have a deep connection to plants and nature if we allow ourselves the time and quiet to accept it.”

By creating truly inspired floral cuisine, Bee has found a way to share her own connection to flowers and nature and to enrich and nourish the lives of those around her. Beautiful, healthy, and vibrant food featuring home-grown flowers is so uniquely satisfying - to the body as well as to the spirit. And every day spent with flowers, in the garden or in the kitchen, deepens this connection to nature.

Sound inspiring? **Come join us on April 17, 2019**, when Bee, the Flower Chef, will share her artistic inspirations and her practical experience as a floral alchemist. Bee’s program, *Buds, Blossoms, and Blooms - Culinary Artistry with Edible Flowers*, will offer Herb Society members and guests the skills and encouragement needed to create exquisite floral art in their own kitchens.



Bee, the Flower Chef, surrounded by the extravagant floral bounty of her organic garden, one of her exuberant garden cakes, and a miniature marching band of chocolate cupcakes all decked out in their flower caps.

You may remember Bee from our recent program *Moringa - A Nutritional Powerhouse in Your Backyard*, presented by **Tommy Garcia-Prats**, the co-founder of Houston's urban farm *Finca Tres Robles*. Bee shared with us three delicious ways to incorporate super-healthy moringa into our menus - savory herbal crackers, refreshing tea, and absolutely over-the-top chocolate-moringa truffles.



Bee frequently shares her floral creations with the farmers and supporters of *Finca Tres Robles* and of course, with her lucky family and friends. She also provides catering services for special events, supplies edible flowers to local restaurants, and shares her knowledge at workshops.

Not only is Bee presenting the April program on edible flowers, but she will also be a featured speaker at our **April 27, 2019 HERB FAIR HERBS FROM SOUTH OF THE BORDER**. Her program, *Agua Frescas, Margaritas, and More - Mexican Beverages with an Herbal Twist*, draws upon her experience of living “authentically” throughout Mexico while studying culinary techniques and traditions. From Mexico, she moved to Toronto, where she created her own dream-job as a caterer. In an interview, Bee describes her growing appreciation that flowers actually have a more powerful place on the table than in the bouquet:

I crafted my career around food and early on landed a contract that had me creating a monthly lunch, a cultural event, focused on a country or region. I would research the music, textiles, traditions and feast foods of each place. It didn't take long to realize that edible flowers play a prominent role in celebratory foods all around the world. What struck me during these meals was how the presence of flowers seemed to bring each person in to be more present themselves in that moment. To slow down, pay attention, appreciate, finally to eat with intention. It was beautiful! (Interview in Voyage Houston, “Life and Work with Bee Holleran”)

Bee's consulting and catering business, *Flora Cocina*, is uniquely dedicated to creating good food with flowers. She believes that “making and sharing food with those we love is one of the finest pleasures of life, and elevating that food with edible flowers brings presence and that little something special to each meal.”

Wouldn't we all love such a job!

The following images from Bee's work, all used with her permission, convey “that little something special” far better than I could ever do with words.



Truffles with ruffles and petals for the plate!



A super-blue latte (secret ingredient is butterfly pea flower, one of Bee's favorites), followed by a composition worthy of Cezanne - "Still Life with Raphanus" - created with produce from Finca Tres Robles. Honey and rose water cookies remind us to "Bee Sweet"; and finally, why have your salad on a plate when you can have it in a gladiola blossom?

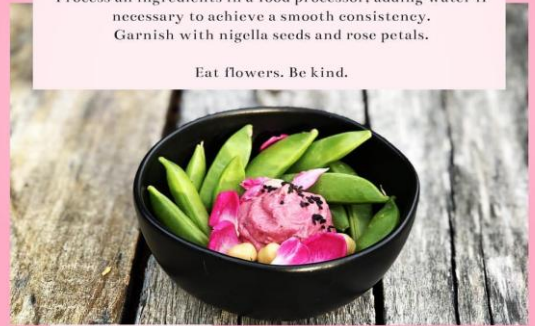


BEETROOT & ROSE HUMMUS

- 2 medium beetroots, roasted
- 1 can chickpeas, drained
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 or 2 cloves of fresh or roasted garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt and toasted cumin
- 1 teaspoon rosewater

Process all ingredients in a food processor, adding water if necessary to achieve a smooth consistency. Garnish with nigella seeds and rose petals.

Eat flowers. Be kind.



FLORA COCINA



We're in the pink with electric rainbow chard from Finca Tres Robles; a dainty and demure beetroot and rose hummus; and another magnificent cake overflowing with fuchsias (yes - really!), jasmine, celosia, scented geranium leaves, and pansies. A fluttering of calendula petals and one perfect rose, the floral symbol of love, complete the picture. Good things also come in small packages, especially if they're cupcakes embellished with floral confetti.




FLORA COCINA
LEMON BLOSSOM TART

1/2 c toasted coconut
1 c toasted macadamia
1 c oats
Process till fine, then add
2 c dates + 1/2 t sea salt
2 T coconut oil
Process and press into pan.

1 c coconut cream
1 c raw, soaked cashews
2 T coconut oil
Juice and zest of 2 lemons
1 t salt + 2 T cornstarch
3 T agave or maple syrup
Blend till smooth, pour into
crust and chill a few hours.

Eat flowers. Be kind.



Even chocolate frosting can be in the shape of flowers, forming a perfect backdrop for diminutive pentas, marigold petals, and forget-me-nots. Who could forget these beauties? Just a reminder: Bee conducts amazing edible flower workshops. You, too, can bring edible flowers into your kitchen and make someone happy! Another spectacular chocolate cake festooned with a butterfly pea vine from the garden; and oh, my, a lemon tart is just not complete without a topping of crystallized lemon blossoms.



These images of Bee's culinary artistry give just a small hint of the drama, presence, mood, and emotion she can create with flowers. And I think you'll agree that the modest way she describes adding "a little something special" to meals with flowers is a monumental understatement.

Would *you* like to add floral embellishments to your food? A "little something special", perhaps? Bee can help you accomplish this.

If you feel confident of your culinary skill and practicality, but still a little shy about your own artistic gifts, our April 17, 2019 program, *Buds, Blossoms, and Blooms - Culinary Artistry with Edible Flowers*, will give you the inspiration you need to "blossom" in the kitchen.

And if you're overflowing with ideas but need help with technique and direction, the Flower Chef of *Flora Cocina* will share the practical knowledge needed so those culinary flowerscapes in your mind can take shape.

Artists frequently look to flowers for their inspiration, and I think we can all agree that Bee is a very special kind of artist. She has the special combination of passion and practicality that it takes to create a Shasta daisy, a scented calla lily, or a cake overflowing with flowers.

I am going to close with another quote, this time from the great painter Claude Monet (1840-1926). Flowers were his greatest inspiration - for his painting, in his garden, and in and along the banks of his beloved water lily pond at Giverny. But flowers meant even more to Monet - they were an absolute requirement for his happiness, his continued energy and productivity, and his general satisfaction with life. When I read his words, "I must have flowers, always, and always", I hear an echoing response from his kindred spirit and contemporary, Luther Burbank:

*"Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful;
they are sunshine, food, and medicine for the soul"*

The **South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America** is dedicated to sharing "The Use and Delight of Herbs" and welcomes all interested guests to our meetings. There is no charge to attend.

We meet in the **Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion**, 1500 Hermann Drive, where it T-intersects with Crawford Street. There is free parking adjacent to the Pavilion. Members gather at 6:15 pm, and the public is welcome to join us at 7:15 to enjoy the April 17, 2019 program, *Buds, Blossoms, and Blooms - Culinary Artistry with Edible Flowers*. ■

You can learn more about Bee and Flora Cocina at floracocina.com
All of the images are from Instagram: @floracocina



The Herb Society of America, South Texas Unit

36th Annual Herb Day Luncheon and Symposium

Herbs from South of the Border

April 27, 2019 - 8:45am – 3pm
Fondren Hall, St. Paul's United Methodist Church

Agua Frescas, Margaritas, and More Mexican Beverages with an Herbal Twist
Presented by Bee, the Flower Chef at Flora Cocina

Mexican Herbs for Flavor, Flair, and Fire
Presented by Ana Beaven, Creator of Cuchara, Houston's Mexico City Bistro

Traditional Mexican Herbalism and Curanderismo
Presented by Carlos Hernandez-Calderoni, Clinical Herbalist and Nutritionist

Catered Lunch by Cuchara
Herbal Marketplace
Herb Plants for Sale

\$50.00 Registration Fee
Attendance by pre-paid registration only.
For further information visit www.herbsociety-stu.org
or email southtexasunit@gmail.com