

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLVIII NUMBER 1



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
JANUARY 2025

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

January 2025 Calendar

Jan 11, Sat. 9:00 am – 12 noon

Garden Workday Kolter Elementary at 9710 Runnymede Dr., Houston, TX 77096

Jan 14, Tues. 11:30 am

Note change in time and location

Adventure Luncheon – members pay for their own lunch - at **Lemongrass Café** (<https://www.lemongrass-cafe.com/> 5701 Bellaire Blvd., Suite 120, 77401). **RSVP by January 10** to Benée (bccurtis5@comcast.net) Weather permitting, we will tour Susan Wood's nearby garden. Susan Wood will be making a brief presentation to us on... lemongrass! **Open to members and members' guests.**

Jan 15, Wed. 6:15 pm

Open to the public

Evening Meeting "Eyes on the Garden" presented by **Stewart Zuckerbrod, MD**. Cherie Flores Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Doors open at 6:15 pm, potluck meal and program to follow.

Jan 25, Sat. 10:00 am

Westbury Garden Workday at 12581 Dunlap Street, Houston, TX 77035

Jan 28, Tues. 6:00 pm

Lagniappe "Borscht from Baba's Kitchen - An Introduction to Ukrainian Cuisine". Join us at 6:00 pm at Frontier Grill in the Conservatory Food Hall, 606 Dennis St., Houston, TX 77006 for a traditional Ukrainian meal.

February 2025 Calendar

Feb 8, Sat. 9:00 am – 12 noon

Garden Workday Kolter Elementary at 9710 Runnymede Dr., Houston, TX 77096

Feb 11, Tues, 10:00 am

Day Meeting "Herbal Electuaries" presented by member **Ro Jones**. Cherie Flores Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy following the meeting. Beverages will be provided.

Feb 16, Sun. 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Lagniappe "Eco-Printing on Paper with Molly" Enjoy creating art from nature at the home and garden of **STU Member Cynthia Card**. The workshop will be conducted by artist **Molly Koehn** who will provide the materials and the expertise. Registration fee depends on number of participants. Watch your email for further information.

Feb 19, Wed. 6:15 pm

Open to the public

Evening Meeting "Journey to Wellness" **Sarah Gallander**, BS Nutrition & Dietetics, Stephen F. Austin State University; Board Certified Functional Nutrition Practitioner (AADP, AANWP, ANWPB); Founder of **The Wellness Matrix** and Co-Founder of **Functional Nutrition Collective**. Cherie Flores Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston, TX 77004. Doors open at 6:15 pm, potluck meal and program to follow.

Feb 22, Sat. 10:00 am

Westbury Garden Workday at 12581 Dunlap Street, Houston, TX 77035

Newsletter deadline: 25th of the month is strictly enforced (February editor is Linda Alderman)



Carnation

Happy Birthday!

1/6 Donna Wheeler 1/7 Joyce Wilkenfeld 1/12 Linda Van Heeckeren



WELCOME
JANUARY!
CHAIRMAN'S
CORNER



I hope everyone is feeling refreshed, restored, and raring to go as the STU welcomes the arrival of another New Year.

What a fantastic and festive wrap-up of 2024, with not one, but two fun-filled holiday parties. Special thanks go to Angela Roth, who hosted a lovely luncheon complete with a good-natured gift “exchange” (if “stealing” can be

considered “exchanging”) and a surprise visit from a jolly elf couple straightfrom Santa’s workshop. **Linda and Steven van Heeckeren** arrived all decked out in top-to-toe elf (elven?) attire - from jaunty holiday headgear to upturned tippy toe slippers! Don’t miss their photos in the holiday party collage.

Elayne Kouzounis hosted a second holiday party which included ademonstration of “Holiday Cocktails, Mocktails, and Punches” by **Stephanie Calloway and Benée Curtis**. Even without alcohol, the mocktails and punchespacked a knockout punch of flavor and color. Thank you, ladies, for a wonderful program. And by the way, one of Stephanie’s hidden talents is mixology. She tends bar every Saturday night at LIT Bookbar in Richmond, TX, where book lovers gather to unwind and sip on their favorite drinks. We plan a group adventure to the Bookbar this spring, so watch for your invitation.

Other special “Lagniappe”activities to add to your calendar –

In addition to the usual Day and Evening meetings, we are planning an educational dining experience at Foreign Grill in the Midtown area of Houston. On January 28, Beck, who is from Uzbekistan, and his wife Irina, from the Ukraine, will host "Borscht from Baba's Kitchen - An Introduction to Ukrainian Cuisine", but that’s just the beginning. They have greatly expanded their menu, and now offer selections from most of the countries of the former Soviet Union. Watch your email for further information.

And in February, you will have an opportunity to try your hand at “Eco-Printing on Paper with Molly Koehn”. STU member **Cynthia Card** will host the workshop at her next-door B&B on February 16 (thank you, Cynthia!). Further information is coming, but you should start collecting leaves and flowers now.

The STU is in demand! **Julie Fordes, Ro Jones, Janice Stuff, and Karen Cottingham** participated in the 2024 Urban Harvest Women in Agriculture Conference on December 13. In return for providing delicious herbal tea for 200 attendees, we were given space at an outreach table where we introduced members of the female agricultural community to the South Texas Unit.

We have also been invited to participate in the Brazos/Fort Bend Home and Garden Show on January 24-26. Show planners are requesting STU member-volunteers to present educational programs on their “BIG BLOOM” gardentheater stage. In return, the STU would be provided with a complimentary booth for outreach. Please contact **Angela Roth** angelaroth1983@gmail.com if you are interested.



And finally, I am delighted to announce that the STU has just been awarded a \$1000 grant from the Texas Lavender Association. The lavender group recently voted to disband and distribute their remaining funds to gardening organizations with an interest in herbs. STU members **Stephanie Calloway**, **Virginia Camerlo**, **Julie Fordes**, **Tricia Bradley**, **Benée Curtis**, and **Karen Cottingham** quickly got into action, and requested funds to engage **Susan Belsinger** as our special guest speaker for Herb Day 2025. We are thrilled that we received the largest grant offered, and are busy working out the details of Susan's program. Special thanks are due Stephanie, who, in addition to her bartending skills, has mastered the art of writing grant proposals.

I'm looking forward to another great year of herbal adventures, and hope that many of you who are watching from the sidelines will join in. We welcome everyone who has an interest in herbs. If you are interested in becoming a member, please see the membership section of our website <http://www.herbsocieystu.org/membership.html> or contact our Membership Chair, **Janice Freeman** at janicehfreeman@comcast.net.

To all our herbal friends - may your New Year be filled with good times, good health, and good friends.

Karen Cottingham, Unit Vice Chair
On behalf of Dena Gaydos, Unit Chair



STU January Events

Day Meeting – Adventure Luncheon
Lemongrass Café
5701 Bellaire Blvd, Bellaire, TX 77401
11:30 am
RSVP by January 10 to Benée
(bccurtis5@comcast.net)
Members and their guests!



Announcing Our January Evening Program "Eye on the Garden"



Atropa belladonna



Euphrasia officinalis (Eyebright)

Presented by:
Stewart Zuckerbrod, MD
January 15, 2025

"Eye on the Garden" – Presented by Dr. Stewart Zuckerbrod

Although doctors' offices may seem very isolated from the "natural" world, there are fascinating connections between the garden and the care of patients. Many of our therapeutic agents are derived from plants, and there is a long history of utilizing naturally derived substances in caring for eye patients. Current science reinforces the importance of the garden in taking care of our most precious sense!

Dr. Stewart Zuckerbrod is a Board Certified ophthalmologist in practice with Greater Houston Eye Consultants, and is a Clinical Instructor at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

He is also an avid gardener who started collecting plants when he was in Elementary School. Over the years, he has discovered some amazing links between his profession and his hobby, and has put this information together in a talk that is both educational and entertaining. In the course of the presentation, he will discuss the millennia-long relationship between plants and eye surgery, herbs and other plants that have been used for eye care, and also the dangers - including blindness - of the deadliest plant in the world!



January Evening Lagniappe

"Borscht from Baba's Kitchen - An Introduction to Ukrainian Cuisine"

**Join us January 28
6:00 pm at the Frontier Grill in the Conservatory Food Hall, 606 Dennis St., Houston, TX for a traditional Ukrainian meal.**

**RSVP with Karen Cottingham
at karen.herbsociety@gmail.com
Watch your email for further information**



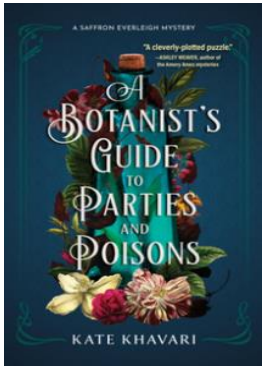
"Tis the season..." Day Meeting Review

The Day meeting on December 10 at the home of member **Elayne Kouzounis** (A BIG THANK YOU Elayne for your hospitality) was very well attended. It was great to gather and have the group include some longtime members that we don't see often enough. We were also excited to see sweet baby Harrison Gaydos in attendance. **Stephanie Calloway and Benée Curtis** presented a program on "Holiday Mocktails, Cocktails and Punches." Following the demonstrations and discussion we enjoyed three different mocktails and three different punches with our potluck lunch. See recipes at the end of the newsletter.



Top Row: Dena Gaydos with baby Harrison, our wonderful hostess, Elayne Kouzounis, Stephanie Calloway, Catherine O'Brien and Benée Curtis

Bottom Row: The PUNCH!, presenters Stephanie Calloway and Benée Curtis, and the food, of course!



Reminders: Our pick for the spring (May 13) meeting's discussion is Kate Khavari's [A Botanist's Guide to Parties and Poisons](#). Goodreads describes the book as "The Lost Apothecary meets Dead Dead Girls in this fast-paced, STEMinist adventure. Debut author Kate Khavari deftly entwines a pulse-pounding mystery with the struggles of a woman in a male-dominated field in 1923 London." Our program that month will be on "Saffron" presented by **member Beth Murphy**. Coincidentally, the protagonist in the book's name is ... Saffron! All are welcome to join the book discussion (even if you don't make it all the way through the book).

Our March 18 meeting will be a potluck picnic and plant swap. Be thinking now of plants you might like to share at the plant swap. We haven't defined yet how the plant swap will be conducted, but wanted to remind members that we'll be doing the exchange so you can divide, root, sow seeds, etc. now if needed.

Participation and Commitment

Janice Freeman

The members of The South Texas Unit (STU) volunteer in various ways throughout the year. On page 25 of the STU Directory we list examples of some of these volunteer activities. The Herb Society of America (HSA) collects volunteer hours. The total sum of hours is viewed as an indicator of member participation and commitment to the organization and its goals. If you haven't done so already, write down your Herb Fair related volunteer hours and be ready to submit in July 2025. In 2024, the following members have successfully reached a milestone of commitment to HSA and STU.





Making Spirits Bright at the STU Holiday Party



Catherine O'Brien presented a class on infused oils and salves for Urban Harvest on December 7. The students learned to make calendula salve and pine salve, just in time for homemade Christmas gifts. Urban Harvest classes are held in the Bauer Education Center at the non-profit organization, Trees for Houston. For more classes at Urban Harvest, check out

<https://www.urbanharvest.org/education/>



Thinking of You

Lois Jean Howard – passing of her daughter, Jeanne Treadway, on November 27, 2024



Rosemary for Remembrance



- **Apple Cider Syrup**

- Warm 1 cup apple cider to dissolve 1 cup brown sugar. Store refrigerated in airtight container for up to three weeks

- **Apple Cider Mocktail**

- 1 oz Apple Cider Syrup · 1 oz cool cinnamon tea* · 2-3 oz club soda
- Mix all ingredients in glass over ice. Stir.
- Rub glass rim with apple slice before making drink for added flavor. Garnish with cinnamon stick.

*Can sub (or just add) 1-1.5 oz spiced rum or brandy for cinnamon tea.

- **Lavender Honey Syrup**

- Make strong lavender tea (2 TB per cup water, steep for 10 min, strain) and mix 2:1 with honey (2 cup tea to 1 cup honey). Store refrigerated in airtight container for up to three weeks.

- **Lavender Honey “Mojito”**

- 2-3 fresh mint leaves · 1 oz lavender honey syrup · 0.5 oz lime juice · 2 oz club soda**
- Muddle fresh mint leaves in shaker.
- Add syrup, lime juice (and rum, if using rum in addition to club soda) and ice to shaker.
- Rub glass rim with lime peel. Add ice and club soda to glass.
- Strain shaken contents into glass. Garnish with lavender stem.

**Can add 2 oz rum in addition to club soda.

- **Lavender Lemon Mocktail**

- 1 oz lavender honey syrup · 0.5 oz lemon juice · 2 oz club soda (or gin)
- Add syrup, lemon juice (and gin) and ice to shaker and shake until chilled.
- Rub glass rim with lemon peel. Add ice and club soda (ice only if using gin) to glass.
- Strain shaken contents into glass. Garnish with lavender stem.

- **Maple Cinnamon Syrup**

- Make strong cinnamon tea – can add cloves and mix 2:1 with maple syrup. Store refrigerated in airtight container for up to three weeks.



Maple Cinnamon Mocktail

- 1.5 oz maple cinnamon syrup · 2 oz club soda (or bourbon) · 0.5 oz lemon juice · dash of bitters (if using bourbon)
- Mix all ingredients into glass. Stir. Add ice and stir to chill. Rub glass rim with lemon peel.

Maple Cinnamon Hot Toddy

- 2-3 oz hot water · 1 oz lemon juice · 1 oz maple cinnamon syrup · Optional 1 oz whisky for cocktail version
- Mix all ingredients into warmed ceramic mug. Stir. Rub mug with lemon peel.

Punch Recipes

Rosemary Fizz

- 2 Tbsp rosemary, crushed but not pulverized
- 3 Tbsp sugar
- ½ c water
- Pinch of salt***
- 8 oz. apricot nectar
- 1 qt ginger ale
- ½ c lime juice

Simmer the water, sugar and rosemary leaves with a pinch of salt for 2 minutes. Cool and strain. In a tall chilled pitcher, mix apricot nectar with ginger ale and lime juice. Fill 8 glasses with ice and pour in the juices. Garnish with twists of lime rind.

The syrup can be prepared several days ahead and refrigerated. This recipe is from the Western Reserve Unit's Savory Seasonings cookbook first published in 1957. The unit serves this punch for special occasions and celebrations.

Yield: 8 (6 oz.) punch cups

From The HSA's Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs, 2007, Edited by Katherine K. Schlosser, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, LA.

*** Punch recipes often include a small amount of salt (aka a "pinch") because salt can enhance the overall flavor profile of the drink by balancing sweetness, brightening citrus notes, and subduing bitterness. Essentially, the salt makes the other flavors taste more pronounced and complex. It acts as a flavor enhancer rather than adding a noticeably salty taste.

Sparkling Spiced Pineapple Punch

- 1 c sugar
- 2 c water
- Peel of 2 lemons grated
- 2 5-inch stick of cinnamon
- 20 whole cloves
- 6 T fresh lemon juice
- 1 (64-oz) bottle of 100% pineapple juice



- 1 (32 oz) bottle of sparkling water
- 1 (32 oz) bottle alcohol-removed sparkling wine

Combine the first 5 ingredients and simmer for at least 15 minutes. Strain out the spices. Chill. Can be made up to a week in advance.

Combine chilled spiced syrup and chilled liquids.

Inspired by Celebrating Herbs: Thirty Years in the Herbarium and Kitchen, 1996, The Arkansas Unit of The Herb Society of America, The Wimmer Companies, Memphis, TN.

Cranberry Basil Sangria-Style Punch

- 1 c water
- 1 c sugar
- ½ c packed basil leaves
- 96 oz cranberry juice
- Juice of 4 large oranges (about 2 c.)
- 32 oz seltzer
- 2 oranges, sliced and quartered
- 2 apples, sliced (remove seeds, but leave core)
- 1 c. frozen cranberries
- ¼ c packed basil leaves

Combine the first 3 ingredients and simmer for at least 15 minutes. Allow to cool then strain out basil leaves. Chill. Can be made up to a week in advance.

Combine chilled syrup, chilled liquids, fruits and basil leaves. Pour over ice to serve.

Yield: 24-26 (6 oz.) punch cups

<https://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a30122958/virgin-cranberry-basil-sangria-recipe/>



The **South Central District Gathering** has been announced in the HSA Winter Newsletter, and I gathered a little more information from Rae McKimm of the Ozark Unit.

- Thursday, May 1 will be an evening reception
- Friday morning, 8-9 a.m., the South Central District meeting.
- Friday, starting at 9 a.m. will be seminars on a variety of herb topics
- Saturday, seminars continue

Lunch is provided. It's included in the fee.

One to two tables will be available for silent auction. Here's hoping each unit provides items for the auction table.

Arkansas is beautiful in the spring, and there will be lots of herbs for sale.



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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