April 2017 Calendar

April 11, Tues. at 10:00 am  
**Day Meeting** at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004), **Hosted by: Lois Jean Howard.**  
Program: “Sumac – Good and Bad”, **presented by Janice Stuff.**  
**Bring your plate and napkin and a dish to share.**

April 19, Wed. at 6:30 pm  
**Evening Meeting** at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004), Hosted by **Beth Murphy and Nita Rowe.**  
Program: “An Outlander Herbal Evening – Travel Though Time with the Scottish Highland Herbalist”, **presented by Kerry Madole.**  
**Bring your plate and napkin and a dish to share.**

April 21, Fri. at 12:00 noon  
**Set-up for Herb Day Symposium**

April 22, Sat. at 8:45 am  
**Herb Day Symposium** at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church (5501 Main St, Houston, TX 77004). **Members should arrive by 7:30 am.**

May 2017 Calendar

May 9, Tues. at 10:00 am  
**Day Meeting** at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004), **Hosted by: Linda Alderman.**  
Program: “Mountain Mint”, **presented by Beth Murphy.**  
**Bring your plate and napkin and a dish to share.**

May 11, Thurs. at 7:00 pm  
**Board Meeting** at TBD

May 17, Wed. at 6:30 pm  
**Annual Meeting of Members of the South Texas Unit** at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004), **Hosted by Donna and Dena Yanowski.**  
**Bring your plate and napkin and a dish to share.**

**Newsletter deadline: 25th of each month**

**Submissions should be at most 1 page in Times New Roman 12**

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**Get Well Wishes to ...**

Janice Dana
Vivian Scallan
Melba Moses
Linda Lain

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**Happy Birthday!**

1- Janice Dana
23 - Thelma Rowe
When we learned that our Annual Herb Day Educational Symposium would coincide with Earth Day, April 22, we embraced the opportunity to dedicate this year’s Herb Day programs and activities to Earth-friendly topics.

For example, attendees can learn how to raise earthworms on their patios or under their kitchen sinks, how to include edible plants in beautiful landscapes that even their neighbors will love, and how to tread lightly on the earth by consuming plant-based foods. Guests will also be introduced to the fascinating concept of Biomimicry, a discipline which looks to the genius of nature to solve the technological and social problems faced by human societies today. Even our table decorations, our lunch and refreshments, and the items for sale to support our Scholarship Fund will have ecologic themes.

Did you know that there are actually two “Earth Days”? Both were first celebrated in 1970 a month apart from each other. The first “Earth Day”, also known as the “Equinoctial Earth Day”, continues to be celebrated around the world on each Vernal Equinox. Always occurring on or about March 20, the Equinox is the day of nature’s equipoise, when the lengths of day and night are the same in all parts of the world. This astronomical fulcrum is a reminder of the sacred concepts of equilibrium and perfect balance. On the precise moment that the sun is directly over the Earth’s equator, Peace Bells are rung in solemn ceremonies all over the world.

“World Earth Day” is the “Earth Day” that we in the United States mostly celebrate. This Earth Day was sponsored by Senator Gaylord Nelson and always occurs on April 22. Senator Nelson envisioned Earth Day as a platform for education and environmental activism. April 22 became Earth Day for practical reasons - primarily to maximize participation on college campuses. This date was chosen because it was unlikely to fall during exams or spring breaks and did not conflict with any religious holidays.

It is estimated that over a billion people celebrate one or the other, or both, of the Earth Days. I hope our HSA-STU salute to Earth Day, Celebrating the Beauty of Earth Day With Herbs, will artfully combine the spirits of both traditional ways of celebrating our earth.

We are hoping that 150 of our friends and neighbors, our fellow HSA members, and those who love their earthly homes will join us for this special day, April 22, 2017.

So make your reservations for Herb Day right now and invite your friends to join you. Share publicity information with your neighborhood organizations and other groups to which you belong. Remember that members who assist in the tasks of making the conference “happen” are entitled to a reduced rate of $15.00. And also keep in mind that the scholarships funded from this effort may just make that critical difference in a young student’s life.

Sally Luna
Unit Chair

Herbs Make Scents – April 2017
Herb Day Symposium Update

From Dena Yanowski
Herb Day Chair

Herb Day 2017, Celebrating the Beauty of Earth Day with Herbs, will be held April 22 at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, from 8:45 am – 3:00 pm. Sharing the day with us are four exciting speakers who promise to make the day fun and educational:

Linda Paisley – an expert in the field of Biomimicry, will highlight the science behind the beauty in our gardens and in nature. Her presentation, Biomimicry: Nature’s Garden of Innovation and Inspiration, will describe a new approach to solving complex human problems by closely observing and imitating natural models, systems and processes.

Angela Chandler – will show us how to bridge the gap between an ornamental garden and an edible one in her talk Landscaping with Ornamentals: Pretty Plants that are Good to Eat.

Pat Greer – a raw-vegan chef you might recognize from the Urban Harvest Saturday Farmer’s Market or the KPFT show Eco-Ology, will speak about the benefits of a plant-based diet in her program, Ethical Edibles – The Earth-Friendly Kitchen.

Mary Sacilowski – an HSA-STU member who is an expert in vermiculture, will describe the important role earthworms play in your garden. Her talk is entitled, The Low-Down Down Under: The Underground World of Earthworms.

Lunch will be catered by FRENCH FIG, owned by HSA-STU member Andi Leger.

As always, we will be having our Herbal plant and craft sale. Proceeds from the sale help us award scholarships to deserving students of Horticulture, Botany, Agronomy, or Agriculture.

Members Need To:

- Continue propagating scented geraniums, lemon verbena, and a variety of different basils to sell. We’re buying plants to sell but also counting on you as members to bring starters from your garden to supplement. Contact Jeanie Dunnihoo for more information or further questions.

- Continue saving your empty decorative, clear or colored glass bottles (not jars more like liquor and oil bottles, preferably shorter than wine bottle height) and drop them by Shirley Mills’ house. Shirley currently has 30 and is in need of at least 60 for her center piece displays. If you have antique or sentimental bottles, write your name on the bottom, and they will be returned to you. Contact Shirley Mills for more information or further questions.

- Start collecting examples from nature that demonstrate the Fibonacci sequence. Examples include pine cones, sunflower heads, calla lilies, succulents, and nautilus shells. These will be used for an educational exhibit complementing the “biomimicry” presentation and possibly for additional decorations. Contact Karen Cottingham for more information or further questions.

- Watch for emails/phone calls from Mary Sacilowski asking members to begin baking snacks for the refreshment table.

- See the attached flyer and registration form, we STRONGLY encourage you to forward, print, and post to friends and the community. Please post on your neighborhood “nextdoor” online site. Printing and posting the flyer and registration form at your favorite local garden stores or community bulletin boards would be greatly appreciated. We’re counting on you and your connections for advertisement.

Members: Don’t forget to register yourself ASAP!

Members are expected to help set up the Friday before the event, April 21, at 12 noon to 5:00 pm and before, during, and after the symposium on April 22.

Contact Dena Yanowski, Chair of Herb Day, for more information. Denayanowski@gmail.com
**About Our Meetings**

Albert Ramos

If you were seeing green shortly after the recent St. Patrick’s Day celebration, either you drank too much green beer or you attended the March 22, 2017 HSA-STU evening program on micro-greens. And if you did attend that program, *Herbal Micro-Greens for Macro-Taste and Macro-Nutrition*, you were not alone - you were in the good company of our twenty-two (22) members and thirty (30) guests! Just over half the guests were with us for the first time, and we certainly hope that they will return again soon.

The program was outstanding. Jacob Martin, a local micro-green farmer whose business is called *Old School Produce* ([oldschoolproduce.com](http://oldschoolproduce.com)), gave a lively and informative overview of his experience growing micro-greens commercially. Jacob has been providing micro-greens, baby vegetables, and edible flowers to some of Houston’s most renowned restaurants since 2014. His business has recently expanded to four greenhouses in the Cottage Grove neighborhood.

The first thing we learned is that not all micro-greens are green. They come in a pleasing palette of some of the most vivid colors in nature. We saw micros with neon-colored stems of red, pink, and fuchsia (beet micros and radish and kohlrabi sprouts); greens streaked with garnet-red stripes (red-veined sorrel); iridescent purple “greens” (dark opal basil and perilla); and fluorescent frills of ruby red (red amaranth). Of course, there were lots and lots of bright green plants as well (pea tendrils, sunflower shoots, corn shoots, carrot tops, wheatgrass, kale, and many more). Jacob generously brought full trays of many of these micros for us to sample and to use as healthy, flavorful garnishes on our pot-luck dishes.

We also learned that micro-greens are surprisingly easy to grow as long as you know how much to water them and when to do it; so you do have to check them frequently. The nice thing, however, is that the greens are ready to cut and enjoy in just a matter of days or weeks.

Along with his practical growing tips, Jacob gave expert culinary advice such as, “Basil and chervil pair well with chicken” and “Fennel is great with fish.” He also had lots to say about the use of micro-greens in cocktails, the newest trend in creative “mixology”. In case you did not attend the meeting and want to know, he did not bring any samples of cocktails! And I didn’t hear him mention anything he’d pair with chocolate. I really hope there is a micro that would be fantastic on a rich, dark chocolate torte or brownie!

The success of the program was due in no small part to the hard work and generosity of several members. Hostesses Mary Sacilowski, Jacqui Highton, and Andi Leger decorated the tables and made sure everyone felt welcomed. Andi was in charge of the micro-green tastings and brought a dozen different micro-greens to complement Jacob’s plant trays. Members and guests lined up again and again and were served as many samples of the fresh micros as they wished. How fresh were they? They were still growing in their tiny trays. All we had to do was cut them!

For the micro-green tasting, Andi brought several types of bread and prepared a selection of whipped butter, cream cheese, and goat cheese. Guest Bobby Jucker also brought many (and I mean more than a dozen) loaves of fresh focaccia from his bakery, *Three Brothers Bakery*. Thank you, Bobby, for the delicious bread.

But we cannot live by bread alone; so Donna Yanowski brought her fancy blender and special ingredients to make us delicious smoothies incorporating Jacob’s micro-sunflower shoots.

And all the members and guests were grateful to Susan Wood for the clever way she enhanced the “take-home” message of the program. She decorated the dining tables with dozens of packets of seeds suitable to grow as micro-greens, sprouts, and micro-herbs and then generously invited all of us to take them home to plant. What a timely gift!

By applying Jacob’s practical advice, we should all be enjoying “macro-taste and macro-nutrition” in just a few days or weeks! Thank you, Susan; we appreciate your generous nature. Wouldn’t it be nice if someone were to bring their own home-grown micro-greens to next month’s pot-luck?

Jacob and Andi also gave away the potted micros remaining at the end of the evening. And Bobby brought so many loaves of focaccia that everyone
who stayed late to help clean up went home with a loaf or two of this delicious bread. Thank you, Jacob, Andi, and Bobby!

By the way, you may have heard Andi’s last name, Leger, pronounced different ways. It’s actually pronounced ley-zhey. The “ley” rhymes with “hey” as in the staccato “Hey, you!”, but not as in the longer “a” sound of “hay” as in the proverbial “needle in a haystack”. The “zhey” rhymes with “ley”. Now you know! Incidentally, “leger” is also the first part of the word “legerdemain”. “Legerdemain” literally means “lightness of hand” and refers to an amazing display of skill or adroitness. This is the perfect word to describe a culinary conjurer like our Andi. Andi’s professional catering business, FrenchFig Catering, will be providing our lunches for Herb Day.

The March 2017 evening meeting really was another outstanding event. It was wonderful to see members and guests crowding around Jacob and Andi after the program. They re-sampled their favorite micro-greens, got tips for successful growing at home, and shared opinions on culinary pairings. So many people commented positively on the presentation, and several guests said they appreciated the accessible manner in which our educational and informative programs are presented. This may be one of the reasons that five (5) guests who have attended three or more meetings completed HSA-STU membership applications before they left that evening.

The next meeting will be just as wonderful as tonight’s was; so you’ll definitely want to attend. Please join us on April 19, 2017 as HSA-STU member Kerry Madole takes us overseas to Scotland for An Outlander Herbal Evening – Travel Through Time with the Scottish Highland Herbalist. See Karen Cottingham’s article, Herbal Traditions from Scotland’s Soil, elsewhere in this newsletter for further information. Get ready to march to the beat of a different drummer and plan now to attend the April evening meeting!

From Thelma Rowe and Pam Harris

The day group met on March14, where Pam Harris presented an informative program on Milkweed. Pam shared a summary of the plants she discussed. Family: apocynaceae Genus: Asclepias

The list below are seven Asclepias plants that will grow in our area, depending on how much work you want to invest in growing them!

-Asclepias incarnata (swamp milkweed). Enjoys damp soil, full sun and tolerates clay soil. Has adapted in most of North American including portions of Canada. This species grows two to four feet tall is less milky than other milkweeds and is perennial. The flower is pink, its species name means “flesh colored” in Latin.

-Asclepias perennis (aquatic milkweed). Native habitats are hydrated soils, flood plains, water way margins, marshes, ditches and wetlands. Shade tolerant with white and purple flowers and grows 18” to 24” tall performing well under average garden conditions.

-Asclepias viridis (green antelopehorn). A native perennial, clump forming, taprooted and may reseed under good conditions. Likes moist to average moist soil, tolerates clay soil and is somewhat drought tolerant. Viridis is common in pastures from Kansas to Texas, does well in rich soil or poor. Well suited to average garden conditions, grows one to three feet and is hardy in zones 5-9. The flower is green and white.

-Asclepias linearis (slim milkweed) Native to the lower 48 states with average water needs. It grows 12” to 18” in full sun with a white and green flower.

-Asclepias oenotheroides (zizotes milkweed) Zizotes is the Spanish name for this plant, meaning skin sores. Native to the lower 48 states it prefers sandy gravelly ground, prairies, ditches, and fields. This plant grows up to three feet tall and has green flowers with purple tinges. This flower is not as showy as the other milkweeds.

-Asclepias tuberosa (orange milkweed, plurisy root, Chigger Flower). Native to parts of Canada and the lower 48 states, this species has no milky sap, grows one to three feet tall and prefers well drained sandy soil. Grows in prairies, open woods, canyons and is common in eastern two thirds of Texas.

Continued on next page
**New Member Moments**

**JENNA WALLIS**

You have probably already noticed our new member, Jenna Wallis, who assisted Mary Sacilowski with the *Down and Dirty* program on vermiculture last fall. And if you are wondering who has been bringing all the delicious fermented foods and beverages to our potluck dinners...that would be Jenna. Something fresh is always bubbling in her kitchen. You can ask her anything about *kimchi*, *kvass*, *kefir*, or *kombucha* - like, “Why do so many fermented foods begin with the letter “K”?"

Jenna and her husband, Mike Jensvold, are also energetic and innovative gardeners. They are currently in the process of dog-proofing their backyard garden. Apparently, their massive Akita, Nova, is showing more interest in their garden than is sustainable!

A voracious reader, Jenna is interested in almost everything. She speaks Italian and Spanish fluently, and has a working knowledge of German, French, and Latin. Jenna’s the one who creates the English subtitles for the rest of us attending foreign-language operas. She also translates plays from one language to another. When she is not translating, Jenna designs and maintains computer and communication networks.

Please join us in welcoming Jenna as a creative and enthusiastic new HSA-STU member.

**MIKE JENSVOLD**

Please welcome another new HSA-STU member, Mike Jensvold. Mike is a Civil Engineer who specializes in storm, water, and sewer drainage design. More importantly, though, he is a kind, curious, and all-around generous man.

And good guy that he is, Mike basically joined HSA-STU to share an activity with his wife, Jenna Wallis. Jenna is also a new member.

Herb-wise, Mike is interested in the culinary herbs of his Scandinavian heritage. And after many years of living in the Midwest, he is an enthusiastic and experienced gardener. Mike’s kitchen herb garden thrives with regular applications of worm castings. Ask Mike about his vermiculture hobby and learn how to transform your own kitchen and paper scraps into super-rich compost.

Please give Mike a warm welcome and encourage him to share his expertise with us. HINT: He could probably be persuaded to help with an herbal outreach program designed for children.

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**Add to Your Directory:**

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<td>713-724-2446 Jenna's cell</td>
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HERBAL TRADITIONS FROM SCOTLAND’S SOIL

Karen Cottingham

In 2008, President George W. Bush signed a Presidential Proclamation that stated, in part, that “[m]any of our country’s most cherished customs and ideals first grew to maturity on Scotland’s soil.” The purpose of the Proclamation was to establish National Tartan Day as an annual celebration of Scottish heritage and acknowledgement of Scottish contributions to America’s history and culture. April 6 was selected as National Tartan Day to commemorate the Scottish Declaration of Independence issued on that day in 1320. Our own Declaration of Independence was modeled after that document.

While most Scottish emigrants settled in Nova Scotia and the Carolinas, many of our early Texan pioneers and leaders were also of Scottish ancestry. According to the Texas Scottish Heritage Society, over 40% of the “Old 300” Stephen F. Austin colonists were of Scottish ancestry, and over half of the counties of Texas were named for persons of Scottish descent. Texas heroes with Scottish ancestry include Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, David Crockett, and Jim Bowie. Thirty-four of the men who fought and died in the Battle of the Alamo were native Scots or of Scottish descent.

One of the most poignant figures of that fateful battle was a Scottish bagpiper, John MacGregor, who stood on the adobe wall in the midst of the fray - bullets and cannonballs flying - to “pipe the men on” in true Scottish fashion.

As vital as these famous heroes were in shaping our country and ensuring its success, so too were the ordinary people, the people whose names and stories have been overlooked by history. In this spirit, the HSA-STU April 19, 2017 evening program will celebrate the nameless Scottish folk-healers whose herbal skills and knowledge, whose successes and failures, and whose magic and lore were all a part of the fabric of Scottish and American history.

Kerry Madole’s program, An Outlander Herbal Evening – Travel Through Time with the Scottish Highland Herbalist is a serious study of Scottish herbal folk wisdom inspired by the best-selling Outlander series by Diana Gabaldon. Most of the epic Outlander plot takes place in 18th century Scotland, a time when almost all Scots relied on herbal remedies to treat illness and injury, to manipulate fertility and facilitate childbirth, and to accomplish magical and romantic schemes. The anonymous midwives, cunning women, and herbal healers were the humble yet, at the same time, immensely powerful repositories of this herbal expertise. The essential wisdom of these folk-healers was transmitted through the generations in their songs, stories, and charms.

In the Highlands, the laird’s wife often provided the most competent medical care for her clan, relying on written remedies in “receipt books or “household accounts” in addition to common folk wisdom. And when ministers were called upon to heal the body as well as the soul, they used the local knowledge of herbs to augment the medical training they acquired at university.

The historical framework of Outlander revolves around the Highlanders’ failed Jacobite Uprising of 1745. Gaelic culture never fully recovered from this devastating loss of life and power. Highlanders were forbidden by law to speak in Gaelic or wear their clan-associated tartans. Thousands of the defeated rebels were expelled from Scotland in a series of “Highland clearances”. They found new homes, frequently as indentured servants, in Nova Scotia, the Eastern Seaboard and Appalachian regions, and as previously mentioned, in Texas.

Among the most valuable possessions the displaced Scots brought to their new land was their culturally-embodied herbal wisdom. Traditional Gaelic herbal knowledge, whether embedded within songs and charms, secure in the memories of the wise women, or recorded in precious family “receipt books” safely made the long trip across the Atlantic to become a part of our own history.

So celebrate Scottish heritage on National Tartan Day, April 6, and then join us on April 19, 2017 for our evening program, An Outlander Herbal Evening – Travel Through Time with the Scottish Highland Herbalist. The meeting will be held in the beautiful CHERIE FLORES GARDEN PAVILION at 1500 Hermann Dr. The entrance to the Pavilion’s parking lot is where Crawford T-intersects with Hermann Drive. The spacious meeting room is reserved for us from 6:00 pm - 9:30 pm to allow us plenty of time to set up, socialize, eat, meet, and clean up. Come to the park on April 19!
Without a doubt, rosemary is my favorite herb! Usually in March or April, I am planting it! I love to grow it, I love the fragrance of it, I love to cook with it, and how many other ways can I use it? There’s a lot to learn about rosemary, but here’s a brief introduction, and maybe I can pique your interest. If you are familiar with it, maybe you will find something new here!

**Rosemary**  *Rosmarinus officinalis*  *Lamiaceae*

**Description:** Rosemary is a perennial evergreen shrub with scaly bark and green needlelike leaves. Its flowers pale blue are 1/2 in. long. They grow in clusters of two or three along the branch. Leaves are 1/3 - 1 ½ in. long, narrow, thick, opposite. The upper surface is dark green, white and hairy underneath. A prominent vein runs down the middle of the leaf. It has a pungent piney fragrance. The fruit is a very small spherical nutlet with a smooth surface. It grows 5-6 ft. outdoors and 2-4 ½ ft. indoors.

**A little History:** “Rosemary that’s for remembrance,” are words often quoted by Shakespeare. Long before his time, Pliny recommended this herb for declining eyesight, jaundice and healing wounds. Greek scholars wore rosemary garlands to aid the memory. Later, it was found in religious traditions, it was a symbol of fidelity for lovers, and it was used in wedding bouquets and also in funerals. An old custom of burning rosemary with juniper berries in sick chambers was still in use as late as World War II.

**Cultivation:** I love growing rosemary, perhaps, because it is easy for me to have a beautiful bushy plant that’s relatively free of problems. It is hardy in zones 8 -10. It can be propagated from seeds or cuttings. I prefer cuttings, because I am impatient! It is very slow-growing from seed, taking years to get a few inches high. Full sun is ideal, but I once planted it in a bed that was quite shady and the rosemary tolerated it. Rosemary needs a well-drained bed, it doesn’t like it’s “feet” wet. I lightly water it, but do it quite often, especially in our hot summers! (Mulching is recommended in our heat.)

It grows in a pot on my patio now, and I need to water it daily in the summer. It likes soil pH 6.5 -7.0. It likes a little lime, so I occasionally crush up eggshells in water, and then I water the rosemary with this mixture. Harvesting can be done throughout the year. I usually cut 3 - 4 in. pieces from the tips of the branches.

The Latin name, *Rosmarinus*, means “dew of the sea.”

**Folklore or Fact?**

- Did you know if a rosemary plant grows vigorously in a family’s garden, it means the woman heads the household?

- Tapping a fresh sprig of rosemary against the finger of a loved one was supposed to secure his/her affection.

**Some Uses:** aromatherapy, cooking, cosmetics, crafts, landscaping, topiaries, wreaths

- rosemary tea as a hair rinse for dandruff
- sip rosemary tea for headaches
- pair rosemary with apples or pears, citrus and honey for a fresh dessert
- puree fresh rosemary leaves with olive oil for a dipping sauce
- swish a branch or two through your sauces to get a hint of rosemary
- tie together a small bundle of branches and use a brush for barbecue
- create an herb butter by combining 2 teaspoons of rosemary with ½ cup of softened butter

**Rosemary Cake**

Add 2 tsp. crushed dried rosemary (or 3 tsp. chopped fresh) to any angel food, sponge, or pound or white cake batter. Add same amount to any kind of white frosting or whipped cream. Tint the frosting to suit the season or match your table décor.

**Resources:**
- Rodale’s Illustrated Encyclopedia of Herbs
- Southern Herb Growing by Madalene Hill & Gwen Barclay
- Herbal Treasures by Phyllis V. Shaudys
- The Pleasure of Herbs by Phyllis V. Shaudys
- Herbal Gardens 2017 Calendar by Maggie Oster
The South Texas Unit is a non-profit educational organization incorporated under the State of Texas. The South Texas Unit has no paid employees. Our activities are accomplished solely through the efforts of our volunteers.

The Herb Society of America
South Texas Unit
P.O. Box 6515
Houston, TX  77265-6515

The Herb Society of America is dedicated to promoting the knowledge, use and delight of herbs through educational programs, research and sharing the knowledge of its members with the community.

Find our Unit on the web at:
www.herbsociety-stu.org

Herbs Make Scents – April 2017