

# Herbs Make Scents



THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 10

SOUTH TEXAS UNIT  
OCTOBER 2019

Co-Editors Linda Alderman ([ewalderman@comcast.net](mailto:ewalderman@comcast.net)) & Janice Freeman ([jkfreemanHouStu@outlook.com](mailto:jkfreemanHouStu@outlook.com))

## October 2019 Calendar

- Oct 8, Tues. at 10 a.m.** **Day Meeting** is at the home of **Lois Jean Howard**. The program, "*Let me tell you what Gardening books I have been Reading*," is presented by **Cathy Livingston**. Members should bring **a dish to share**. Guests should **RSVP** to Lois Jean at 713-771-0172.
- Oct 16, Wed. at 6:30 p.m.** **Evening Meeting** is at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004). **Hosts** are **Janet Ruffin** and **Mary Sacilowski**. The program, "*Holistic Animal Care – An Introduction to Veterinary Herbal Medicine*," is presented by **Shana Buchanan, DVM**, private practice. **Bring your plate and napkin and a dish to share.**

## November 2019 Calendar

- Nov 1, Fri. 8:30 a.m.** **Herb Fair Set-up**
- Nov 2, Sat.** (see notes at right) **Herb Fair:** 7:30 am (member volunteers), 8:00 am pre-sale order pick-up, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Open to General Public
- Nov 12, Tues. at 10 a.m.** **Day Meeting** is at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004). The **host** is **Cathy Livingston**. The program, "*The Allure of Black Flowers*" is presented by **Elayne Kouzounis**. Members should bring **a dish to share**.
- Nov 12, Tues. at 6:30 p.m.** **Board Meeting** is at the home of **Donna Wheeler**.
- Nov 20, Wed at 6:30 p.m.** **Evening Meeting** is at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004). **Hosts** are **Lois Jean Howard** and **Nita Rowe**. The program, "*Holistic Gardening for Health and Happiness*" is presented by **Joseph Novak, PhD**, The Betty and Jacob Friedman Holistic Garden, Rice University. **Bring your plate, cutlery, napkin and a dish to share.**
- Newsletter deadline: the 25<sup>th</sup> of every month**  
**(November co-editor Linda Alderman)**



6 Merrienne Timko  
13 Benée Curtis  
13 Catherine O'Brien  
21 Janice Stuff  
29 Martha Burg





## Chairman's Corner

The September evening meeting was touch and go for a while because of tropical storm Imelda. Twenty-nine members and guests braved the rain to share a potluck dinner and hear our valiant Program Chair, **Karen Cottingham**, give a first-rate presentation on the prickly pear complete with the cactus itself. Thank you, Karen for being prepared!



Our New Member Social was held Wednesday, September 25 at the home of **Elayne and Demo Kouzounis**. We had 12 members attending the event. The meal was delicious, and the company even better. We had a marvelous discussion over coffee and dessert. Some of the ideas centered on how to make newer members and the public aware of all the skills and herbal knowledge of our long time members. Many THANKS to Elayne and Demo Kouzounis for hosting us, and to all of the Board members who provided the fabulous sides for our Texas BBQ. It was really wonderful to get to know each other outside the meetings.

**Benée Curtis** and others are busy preparing our 2019 Directory. **The deadline for submission of information to go into the directory is October 1**, allowing around two weeks to publish and distribute the new directory in time for the October evening meeting. Thanks to all who are involved in this labor of love!

The Board has formed two ad hoc committees. One will look into the idea of member scholarships with the intention of providing financial assistance for members to engage in herbal learning opportunities and report back to the group. The second committee will consider how best to update some of the information in our directory. If you have ideas on either of these matters, let me know and possibly join the groups who are working on these items.

I want to thank all of our members who have worked so hard this Fall to make our organization one worth being associated with, without all of you it would be no fun at all!

I await the next cool front....

**Julie Fordes**  
Unit Chair



**TIME TO BRING IN  
YOUR DRIED HERBS**  
to the  
**October Meeting**

basil, oregano, lemon balm,  
Mexican mint marigold,  
all mints, sage, thyme,  
lemon verbena, holy basil,  
and anything else you might have!

**Can't make the meeting?**

**Julie Fordes** will make arrangements to pick up your dried herbs. Contact her at:  
**832-969-8349**



The HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA



## DIANNE DUPERIER

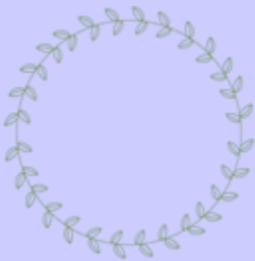
Appointed  
Membership Chair  
of The  
Herb Society  
of America (HSA)

Friend and supporter of the South Texas Unit, Dianne Duperier, is a Southeast Texas Unit member, South Central District, who lives in Beaumont, TX. and has been appointed as the Membership Chair of HSA. Dianne is a faithful and enthusiastic attendee of our South Texas Herb Fairs and Herb Days, driving herself and friends to the events.

Retiring in 2008 after being gone forty-three years,

Dianne returned to her hometown of Beaumont, TX to help with aging parents. She enjoys people, volunteering, helping communities, touring new cities and gardens, and studying history as well as the cultures of various nations. She is a docent with the McFaddin-Ward Museum, a member of the Gulf Coast Historical Society, member of The Herb Society of America, a past certified Master Gardener, member of the Junior League of Houston. Dianne loves Mexican mint marigold (*Tagetes lucinda*), which does very well in her hot humid Texas summers. The Makrut lemon-lime has always intrigued her as she loves all Thai recipes. She loves learning about and is fascinated with all herbs. She has been pressing herbs, flowers, greenery, and weeds (yes, "A weed is but an unloved flower!") and has been making note cards for packages and gifts for several years. She loves all cookbooks and has a collection of over 800 books. Congratulations Dianne!

## HSA Celebrates Membership Milestones



**Christine Ankney** is the newest South Texas Unit member to be inducted into the **Rosemary Circle** for reaching **25 years** of membership in The Herb Society of America.

We commemorate the following members who are celebrating the following anniversary years:

**15 Years:** Martha Burg, Elayne Kouzounis

**30 Years:** Linda Alderman, Cathy Livingston, Sally Luna, Kathy Mc Daniel, Janis Teas

**40 Years:** Joan Jordan

# Herb Fair 2019

## It's Fall Y'all - Thyme to dig in!

**Our 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Herb Fair – November 2, 2019**

Judson Robinson, Jr., Community Center  
2020 Hermann Drive, Houston 77004

### Friday November 1, 2019

*(Members work at least 2 hours if possible)*

8:30am Preliminary set-up

9-11am Plants arrive

11am - 4:30 pm Finish setup for plants, blends, crafts, jelly, the Cafe and Marketplace

### Saturday November 2, 2019

*(Members work at least 4 hours)*

7:30am Member volunteers arrive

8-9am Early entrance for pre-sale customers

9am - 2pm Public sales

2pm Close sales, dismantle/ clean up

The Fair is our largest public event; it offers a great opportunity to share our love of herbs and what we do in the South Texas Unit with attendees. Please greet, share information and invite non-members to visit the membership table and to attend the November meeting.

**Ordering ahead** rather than shopping at the Herb Fair benefits you and the South Texas Unit in several ways:

- You can use your vouchers like cash at the Fair
- You can ensure you get the items you want
- The South Texas Unit pre-sale income is excluded from the calculations used for event "use site" fees at City of Houston venues allowing STU to keep more income

For your convenience you can use your **CREDIT CARD FOR ON-LINE Jelly PRE-ORDERS & PRE-SALE VOUCHERS**. Available soon on our website: <http://www.herbsociety-stu.org/>

## WORKSHOPS FOR HERB FAIR

**At the home of Julie Fordes**

*Oct. 12 Fragrance*

*Oct. 26 Tea/Blends*

Workshops will begin at 10 am. Bring a sandwich and Julie will provide a snack and beverage.

Please **RSVP** at **832-969-8349**



## HERB FAIR REMINDERS

- Save Black flats/trays for plants
- Bring plastic/paper bags for customer purchases
- Bring Pictures of your herb garden to the OCTOBER meeting for an Herb Fair display
- Save your herbs for bakers and crafts



## HERB FAIR EXPENSES

Members and committee chairs-remember to save sales receipts as you prepare products for the 2019 Herb Fair.

You may submit the documentation (STU Reimbursement Form) with attached sales receipts to Janice Stuff, Treasurer, for your reimbursement.

***Please submit all expenses by Dec. 1, 2019.***



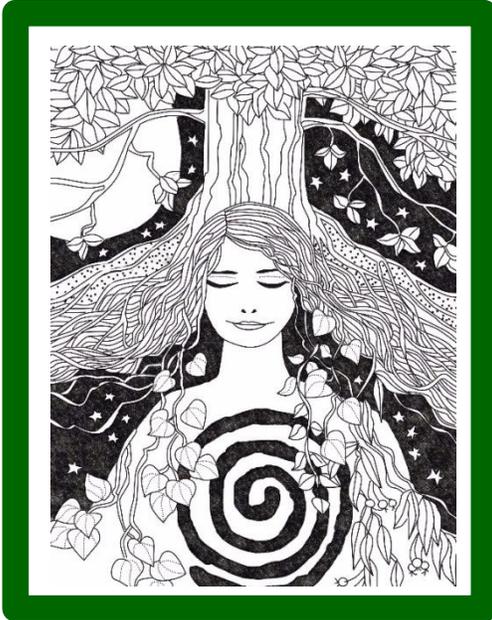
## Back to Our Roots!

### Julie Fordes

“Roots” is all about growing what we need and using what we grow. It sounded simple when I first got caught up in the idea. Since last September I have learned a lot about tending herbs in Houston and how, sometimes, simple things can be more challenging than they first appear. I hope that I have been somewhat effective in passing on a bit of what has been given to me to others. All the herbs that we have so lovingly planted, harvested and dried will hopefully find a home in products for the **Herb Fair Herbal Marketplace**. This was the intent from the beginning; and we will soon find out if “Roots” has made a difference.

I have been working to develop a couple of teas for the two new herbs we have been growing, butterfly pea and holy basil. Of course, it wouldn't be Herb Fair without our tried and true favorites including Texas Herb Tea and Christmas Tea.

My plan is to gather our herbal bounty in the next month or so. If you can bring your herbs to either of our October meetings, please do. If you can't do that, call me and we can arrange pick up. We will package it into teas and blends on Saturday, October 26 starting at 10 am. We will work at the home of **Julie Fordes**. **RSVP** to 832-969-8349 if you want to be part of the fun.



## What's Happening at Our October Meetings?

### Be sure to join the October Day Meeting!

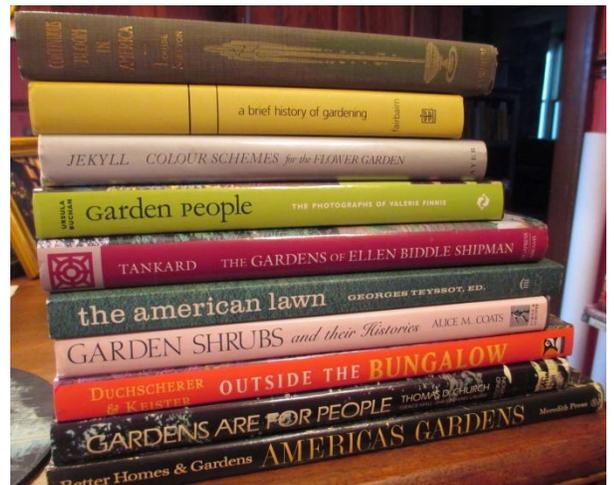
**Tuesday, October 8 at 10:00am**

**Lois Jean Howard** will be hosting the meeting at her home. The program “*Let me tell you what Gardening books I have been Reading*” will be presented by **Cathy Livingston**.

Bring a dish to share, and show us what gardening books you have been reading lately! New members are always welcome. Please let Lois Jean know you are coming.

**RSVP 713-771-0172**

Rosemary for Remembrance,  
**Cathy Livingston**  
Unit Day Chair





## RESPONSIBLE AND COMPASSIONATE INTEGRATIVE CARE FOR ANIMALS

Karen Cottingham

A recent survey conducted by AARP and the National Center for Alternative and Complementary Medicine found that 53% of Americans say they have used complementary or alternative medicine at some point.

People are increasingly turning to all manner of alternative therapies to either supplement or replace conventional medicine. Acupuncture, chiropractic, herbal medicine, homeopathy, nutritional supplements, aromatherapy, and mind-body practices are among the most recognized and accepted of these therapies. And, in addition to these, there are dozens of less well-known interventions available for the more adventurous.

Tremendous enthusiasm exists for therapeutic practices from other cultures, especially Ayurvedic and Traditional Chinese Medicine, yoga, and meditation. Even prestigious Western hospital systems such as M. D. Anderson Cancer Center now offer integrative medicine treatment modalities to enhance and complement more conventional treatments.

As alternative treatment methods gain more mainstream acceptance, many animal owners are also turning to complementary healing therapies such as herbal medicine, acupuncture, and chiropractic for their pets.



If you love animals and have been considering alternative treatments for your pet, don't miss our October 16, 2019 Herb Society program, ***Holistic Animal Care - An Introduction to Veterinary Herbal Medicine***, presented by **Dr. Shana Buchanan, DVM**. Dr. Buchanan offers thoughtful and professional integrative veterinary care at her clinics in Montgomery and Willis, Texas.



After receiving her undergraduate degree and veterinary medicine training at Texas A&M University, Dr. Buchanan became certified in Veterinary Acupuncture, Veterinary Chiropractic, and Veterinary Chinese Herbal medicine. She combines the best of both conventional and complementary therapeutics to create a personalized treatment plan for each animal she treats in her veterinary practice.

Acupuncture, herbs, and manual manipulation have been used to improve the health and function of animals for centuries. Historical records show that in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century the Chinese Emperor Mu relied on acupuncture to keep his vitally important military horses healthy. And generation after generation of shepherds and farmers have passed along their folk wisdom detailing the herbs known to keep their animals healthy.

The recent revival of these holistic approaches to animal health has stimulated research which documents the scientific validity, effectiveness, and safety of such practices. There are now rigorous programs for the professional training and certification of veterinarians in acupuncture, herbal medicine, and chiropractic.



It is important to emphasize the need to consult with a qualified holistic veterinarian when considering alternative care for animals.

I seriously doubt that anyone reading this newsletter would attempt to insert therapeutic needles in a pet dog's scalp or adjust a cat's spine, but how many of you have purchased herbal supplements, "natural remedies", or even essential oils for pets? A quick scan of the internet or trip to a pet supply store reveals hundreds of herbal and "natural" products for everything from flea control to "storm anxiety" and even seizures.



And now that CBD oil is available, has anyone been tempted to “play doctor” with an on-line purchase? It all sounds so easy, and who wouldn’t want their arthritic or anxious pet to be more comfortable? But is it really safe for pet owners to be diagnosing and dosing their animals themselves?

I’m sure everyone would like to keep their animals “happy and healthy, naturally” for as long as possible. There are even on-line classes which promise to teach the “practical tools for every day animal care” - the “practical tools” consisting of essential oils, hydrosols, herbs, nutritional supplements, vitamins, and homeopathic remedies. The only problem is that they may or may not be effective.

And even if you don’t intend to expose your pets to herbs, it can happen accidentally. Aromatherapy, for example, involves essential oils that may be toxic to pets, especially cats. Keep in mind that what is safe for you isn’t necessarily safe to use on or near your pet.

There is obviously a lot to learn about safe and effective integrative medicine for animals, and we are indeed fortunate that such a well-trained and experienced professional as **Dr. Shana Buchanan** has agreed to introduce us to this exciting area of veterinary practice. Mark your calendar now - **October 16, 2019** for **Holistic Animal Care - An Introduction to Veterinary Herbal Medicine** - and be sure to invite your animal-loving friends.

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 in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive**. You may enter the Pavilion’s free parking lot where Crawford Street T-intersects with Hermann Drive.

Hostesses and others interested in setting up the tables and displays can start arriving at 6:00 pm. Other members and guests will gather at 6:30 pm; the potluck dinner will start around 7:00 pm, and the program will begin a half-hour later.





## BEAUTY AND THE BARBS

Karen Cottingham

As a symbol of The Lone Star State, the prickly pear cactus is as quintessentially Texan as a cowboy hat and boots. Our famous state flower, the bluebonnet, is much flashier, bursting forth as it does with springtime explosions of indigo blue. But for the real thing - for endurance that defies adversity and for true Texas grit - it's the prickly pear that more accurately represents us as our state plant.

Like Texas itself, prickly pear is a composite of great contrasts - it's rugged yet somehow charming, and prickly yet undeniably enticing.

It's a delicate beauty that is "armed and dangerous". It's a brilliant design concealed within an absurdly comical shape. And it even has a sweet surprise nestled within its protective barbs.

If any plant could proclaim, "*I'm from Texas, y'all!*", it would be prickly pear!



**Eloise Polk McGill (1868-1939) Prickly Pear, San Antonio**

Prickly pear has played a major symbolic role - sometimes starring, but always supporting - in our state's narrative. As an ever-present backdrop to the unfolding of Texas history and culture, it's not surprising that this sturdy cactus is a favorite theme of many regional landscape artists. The very spirit of Texas - the capacity to bloom despite hardship and to achieve through persistence - seems to radiate from this beautiful painting by Texas Hill Country painter Eloise Polk McGill. McGill's landscapes are highly prized by collectors, museums and universities.

Of all the fascinating directions one could take in a short introduction to prickly pear, I found myself drawn down a definitely less traveled path. I became intrigued with the idea that this thorny, scrappy plant could also be admired as an object of striking beauty.



A closer look at the humble prickly pear reveals an extremely sophisticated design that is endlessly fascinating. There are patterns within patterns and swirls within swirls. Contrasting shapes and textures - some sharp and spiky, and others smooth and rounded - combine with a lovely palette of colors to create exquisite natural art.



Nature has a beautiful and mysterious way of incorporating geometric principles into botanical design. Lines, curves, spirals, symmetries, and repeated patterns and angles serve as nature's architectural elements and embellishments. And nature seems to have been exuberantly generous, even lavish, with the design of prickly pear.

Notice how the various appendages of prickly pear march along with geometric precision to create elegantly intersecting spirals, radial expansions, and even superimposed patterns of parallel waves. With a little imagination, one can see perfectly aligned botanical checkerboards, our eyes effortlessly connecting the dots horizontally, vertically, and diagonally. There are circles, ellipses, parallelograms, trapezoids, and rhomboids, and of course, the egg-shaped fruits and eponymous pear-shaped paddles.

Even though it's not always recognized consciously, humans have an innate responsiveness to the underlying geometric orderliness of nature. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), the Italian astronomer, mathematician, physicist, and consummate observer of nature, expressed the following insight in *Opere // Saggiatore*:



Philosophy [nature] is written in that great book which ever is before our eyes -- I mean the universe -- but we cannot understand it if we do not first learn the language and grasp the symbols in which it is written. The book is written in mathematical language, and the symbols are triangles, circles and other geometrical figures, without whose help it is impossible to comprehend a single word of it; without which one wanders in vain through a dark labyrinth.

For those of us who sometimes wander in the “dark labyrinth”, gazing upon the symmetry and order of nature’s patterns has the power to soothe the soul. Chaos is converted to order, and the world no longer seems so random and unpredictable.



Of course, there is more purpose to nature’s geometry than to soothe the troubled human soul. Precision geometry in plants leads to maximum efficiency - to dense packings of seeds, adequate circulation of air through leaves, and sophisticated water collection systems. The particular array of spines on the prickly pear not only protects the plants from predators, but casts shadows in a pattern that protects the plant from the incessant sun. And the precise rate of tapering of the conical spines can be proven mathematically to maximize the collection of dew and rainwater.



The miracle of all this brilliance is that the designs we humans interpret as the most beautiful are the same ones that are mathematically the most efficient!

This close look at the prickly pear has been a great opportunity to contemplate the hidden depths and sophistication of the plant world. Who could ever have guessed that this humble plant could help us better understand our esthetic and emotional responses to geometric principles in design?



The two images above nicely demonstrate the process of fractal expansion - more mathematical theory - by which the prickly pear plant enlarges itself. The curved green arches are actually vestigial leaves that serve no apparent purpose and will drop off naturally. One or more long spines and an associated tuft of smaller but nastier spines usually develop from each leaf's attachment point.





The bright orange *glochids* - the little tufts of barbed bristles - are arranged on this plant in graceful intersecting spirals. Compound and reversed curves superimposed on the underlying spirals make the pattern especially mesmerizing. On the right, one can see that glochid-spine complexes are also present on the fruits themselves. Circular arrays of increasing and then decreasing circumference are largest at the “waist” of the fruit. The amazing thing is that viewed from another perspective, the glochid-spine complexes line up in ellipsoidal orbits and ever-so-slightly curvilinear diamonds!

I hope that you, too, appreciate the fundamental mathematics of what we call “beauty”. But there are many other types of beauty to consider - for example, the beauty of color and the culinary arts. If you are looking for spectacular flavor, dramatic color and eye-popping presentation, you can hardly improve upon prickly pear.





October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, and if you're planning a pink-themed luncheon, these are just about the pinkest foods I have ever seen. Surprise your guests with neon-bright prickly pear slices garnished with mint, "shocking pink" adult beverages, and a refreshing cactus pear sorbet. Your guests will be "prickled pink"!

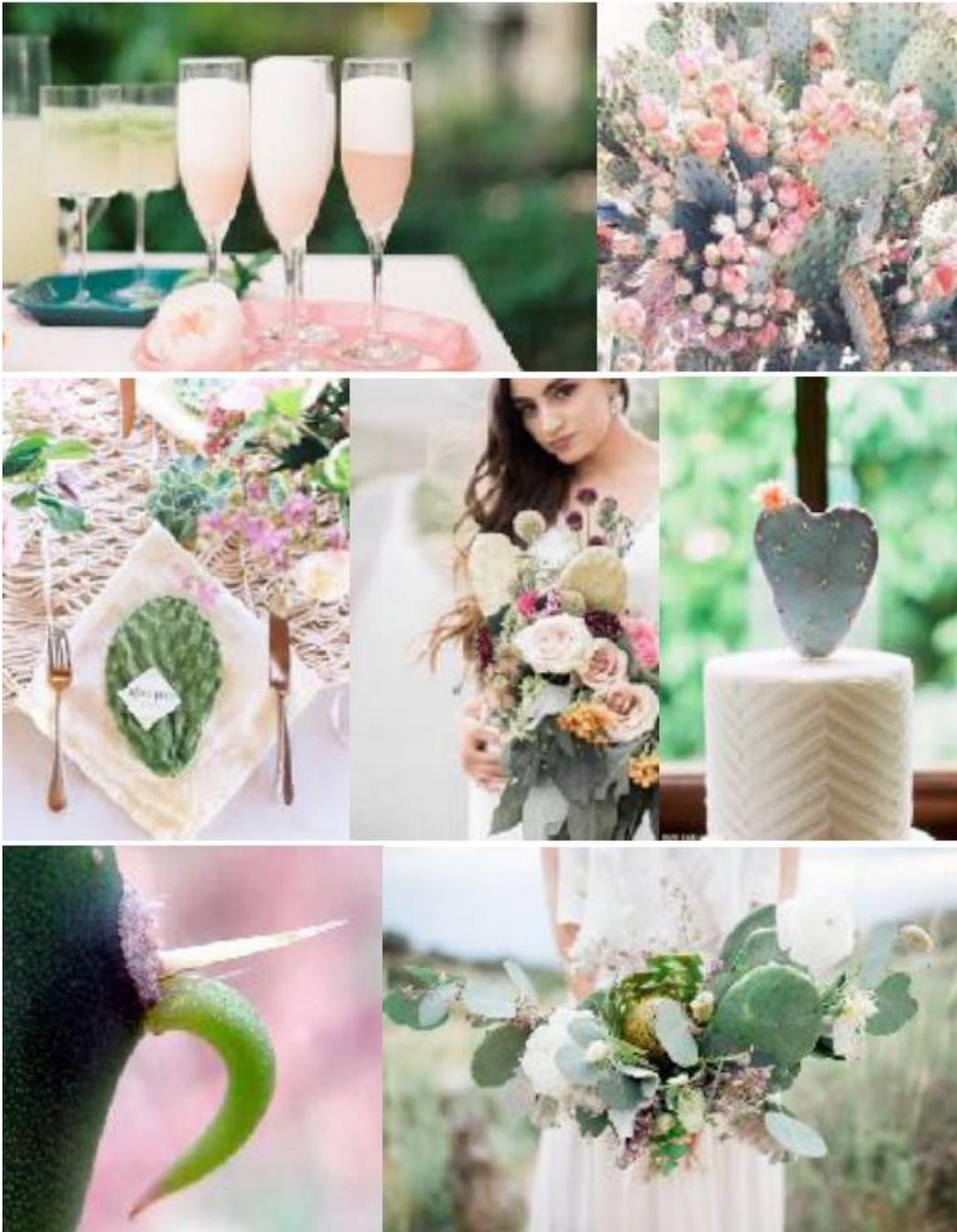
Or, if you're planning a more elegant candlelit affair, prickly pear fruit can rise to that occasion too. The dramatic deep maroon of the prickly pear margaritas, sorbets, and syrup pictured below have the richness and maturity of vintage wine.





For an artist, a luscious fruit cut open at that fleeting moment of full ripeness not only conveys beauty and pleasure but also the inevitable passage of time. The gorgeous still life by photographer Claire Barrett (left upper image) features prickly pear fruit and pads in a composition worthy of the Old Masters. A similar *memento mori*, (left lower image) composed and photographed by Paulette Tavormina, is from her new book "Seizing Beauty". Both artists use the fully ripe prickly pear to remind us that the fruit which bursts with peak flavor also signals the transition into the autumn of our lives.

On a lighter note, prickly pear has also been showing up at trendy weddings - the celebration of the beginning of a life together.





Wedding guests are finding their seats by locating their personalized cactus paddles, toasting the bride and groom with prickly pear mimosas and margaritas, and then enjoying a luscious cactus themed wedding cake. Be careful, though, if you're the one who catches the bouquet!



Thinking about the painful and prickly nature of cactus, I was a little surprised to learn of its popularity for weddings. At first glance, it could seem like a pessimistic portent of hard times ahead or even a statement of abstinence, but somehow cacti always seem to symbolize opposite meanings simultaneously. In the Japanese tradition of *Hanakotoba*, for example, giving the gift of a cactus flower is a clear but delicate message of libidinous interest.

And prickly pear could certainly be seen as a symbol of life, hope, and endurance; of standing up to the test of time, and of steadfastness in the face of adversity. And maybe it's an acknowledgment that we are all a bit prickly but we can bloom spectacularly given the right conditions.



Please use the above image to invite your friends via email. You can also [RSVP on Facebook](#) and invite friends there.

If you require paper flyers, please contact Virginia Camerlo ([camerloclan@gmail.com](mailto:camerloclan@gmail.com)) and they will be made available for you at the October meeting.

If you are a member of a like-minded association and would like us to advertise through their newsletter, please contact Nicole Buegers ([nbuegers@gmail.com](mailto:nbuegers@gmail.com)).