

Herbs Make Scents



THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XLIII, NUMBER 4

SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
APRIL 2020

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April 2020 Calendar

Apr 14, Tue. at 10 a.m.
Apr 15, Wed. at 6:30 p.m.
Apr 25, Sat.

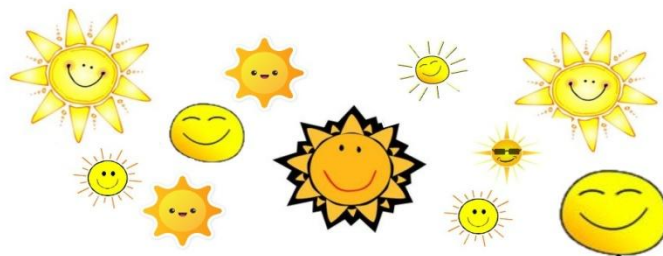
Day and Evening Meetings and **Herb Day** have been cancelled in accordance with the Coronavirus Guidelines issued March 15, 2020 by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and **President Trump**.

May 2020 Calendar

May 13, Tue. at 10 a.m.
May 20, Wed. at 6:30 p.m.

Day and Evening Meeting information is pending.

Newsletter deadline: the 25th of every month
(*May editor Janice Freeman*)



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Many of you know that restaurants have been taking a big hit lately. **Kim McHugh**, owner of **McHugh's Tea Room and Gifts**, in Bellaire, TX. sent the following email to Karen:

"the tea room is OPEN for delivery with a wonderful special menu we created and we will deliver to homes within a certain radius! We could use your help to get the word out. I have 13 employees depending on me to provide them with a way to buy food and pay rent as well as many senior citizens we deliver to for a source of safe and fresh dinners."

Kim had generously agreed to be one of our Herb Day speakers, and has consistently been an enthusiastic supporter of our endeavors, so please support her if you can.

Almost all types of businesses have been similarly affected by COVID-19 so let's support our members where we can. **Bobby Jucker** of Three Brothers Bakery, **Nicole Buegers** of Bee2Bee Honey, and **Donna Fay Hilliard** of Sweet Organic Solutions have all been ardent supporters of The Herb Society and could use a bit of support now.



Chairman's Corner



Greetings,

By now you are all aware that our April meetings as well as Herb Day 2020 have been cancelled due to COVID-19. With all of the uncertainties of the unfolding pandemic, it's just not going to be possible to reschedule Herb Day for a later time this spring. The good news, though, is that our Program Chair, **Karen Cottingham**, has reached out to all of the Herb Day Speakers and all three – **Felder Rushing**, **Teresa Sabankaya**, and **Kim McHugh** – have agreed to speak at our next Herb Day gathering in April of 2021.

Our April Evening Meeting speaker, **Adrian Melissinos**, has also very graciously agreed to present her program "Hildegard of Bingen – The Holy Healer" in September.

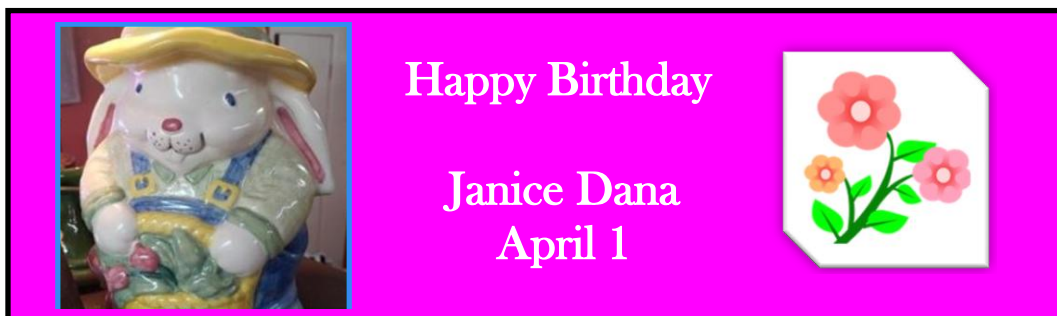
Please check your next newsletter for announcements regarding our Members Annual Meeting, which usually takes place in May.

We are hoping that Herb Fair, currently scheduled for the first Saturday in November, will proceed as planned.

With all of our extra time, don't forget that The Herb Society of America National website is a treasure trove of information. As a member, you have access to archived webinars, the library, and, of course, lots of information on herbs.

While thinking about this extra time, I have reached out to some of our Craft Group members for ideas for Herb Fair Herbal Marketplace products that members could make at home. We hope to put together a list of items that could be made independently, possibly with materials that you already have on hand or could easily acquire. If you have ideas for products that might be good to sell, but might not require special skills, or even have a special skill like sewing, knitting, crocheting, or embroidering, let me know. Stay tuned for more information on this...

Stay safe, my friends...**Julie Fordes, Unit Chair**





A Tribute to Thelma Rowe

Janice Stuff

Thelma Rowe, a member of the South Texas Unit (STU), The Herb Society of America since 1993, completed her life on Feb. 5, 2020. Thelma was a very active member and made several significant contributions during her membership. She held every major office except Chair. Some of her contributions included the development of a high-quality conservation and archival system for the Unit's documents and history. In this activity, Thelma was most proud of the archival quality scrapbooks she created for our Unit's history ca. 1980-1990, as well as scrapbooks for Madalene Hill's tenure during the formative years of the South Texas Unit and term as President of The Herb Society of America from 1986 - 1988. In recognition of Thelma's Archival contributions, she received the first and only "White Glove Award" from The Herb Society of America, ca. 1996.

During Thelma's term as Treasurer she helped to identify sound investment funds for the Unit's financial reserves and to locate and rent the Unit's first storage Unit. Thelma, sincere and reserved, met and talked with people easily. She worked tirelessly as Membership Chair to welcome visitors to our meetings and events and encouraged them to become members of the South Texas Unit. One of Thelma's favorite events was the South Texas Unit's Annual Herb Day Luncheon and Symposium. For many years this event was held at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park. When the Garden Center closed in 2013, Thelma assisted in the search for another appropriate venue for the event. As a member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, she negotiated approval for the South Texas Unit to hold Herb Day there. Finally, Thelma played an active role in the submission of applications nominating STU members for Awards given by The Herb Society of America. Thelma provided unconditional support to the members and the community of the South Texas Herb Society. We will miss her.



Thelma Rowe

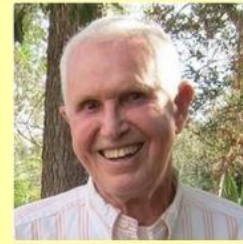


JOHN FAIREY (1930-2020)

From the [John Fairey Garden Conservancy Foundation](#)

(formerly Peckerwood Garden)

"We are sorry to report that our Founder, Friend, Plantsman Extraordinaire, Artist, and Designer, John Fairey, passed away (March 17) morning. We will have a celebration of John's life in the garden as soon as it is safe to do so." [Obituary](#)



John Gaston Fairey, Regents Professor of Architecture at Texas A&M University and Founder of The John Fairey Garden (formerly Peckerwood Garden) in Hempstead, Texas, died on March 17, 2020. On November 17, 1930, John was born in St. Matthews, South Carolina to Isabel Strait Fairey and Philip Washington Fairey. He was born into a family of amateur gardeners. His mother, Isabel, had John and his three older brothers working in the family garden every summer of his youth. In 1964, after receiving his Bachelor of Arts at Erskine College in South Carolina, attending four years of training at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and a Master of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, John, like many South Carolinians in the 1800's, made his way to Texas and was offered a teaching position at Texas A&M. While at A&M John taught design to the potential architects and was known for his wit and wisdom. He was a challenging professor, but earned life-long respect from his students and fellow faculty. Many of John's students stayed in contact with him, many, many years after they attended his classes.

In 1971 John acquired seven acres along a creek near Hempstead, Texas to begin what was to be his steadfast pursuit for the remaining years of his life. Consistent with John's self-deprecating wit, he named the property Peckerwood Garden. With the early help of George Clary, John planned and began construction of what was to become a 39 acre property that is a repository of rare and unusual plants from the United States, Mexico and Asia as well as the site of an award-winning home designed by Texas architect Gerald Maffei. Beginning in the late 1980s John, along with Carl Schoenfeld, made multiple trips to the mountains of Mexico's Sierra Madre to collect seeds and plant cuttings for the garden. In his lifetime, John made 100 trips to Mexico collecting specimens for the garden and providing many of those specimens to other botanical entities including Harvard University, University of California at Berkley, North Carolina State University, Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, and Cholipo Arboretum Foundation in South Korea.

The Garden came to exhibit almost 3,000 species of plants as it meanders along grassy paths into surprising shapes, exhibiting multiple textures, colors and fragrances. John described the Garden as "a living work of art and its own gallery. It is much more than a collection of plants. It, like all gardens, is a unique expression of the highest art form – one which utilizes all the senses in its creation, and satisfies them in presentation." In 1998, John established a garden conservation foundation to help maintain and expand the garden and the foundation's successor, The John Fairey Garden Conservation Foundation, continues today and has plans to continue and expand on John's work.

In addition to his horticultural accomplishments, John also collected Mexican Folk Art on his trips to Mexico. In 2013, he donated over 400 pieces of the unique art to the Art Museum of Southeast Texas in Beaumont.

One of the accomplishments for which John was most proud was being asked to lead a Harvard University expedition to Mexico to locate the rare *Taxus* plant from which taxol is derived. Taxol is used in ovarian cancer treatment. The 1991 expedition located the plant and ultimately resulted in the successful extraction of taxol from the *Taxus* plant leaves. A Mexican university now cultivates large farms to supply taxol for these treatments.



Herbs Make Scents

April 2020

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In 1996 John and Carl were awarded the American Horticultural Award for their botanizing exhibitions to northeast Mexico. John was 2013 recipient of the Scott Medal and Award from Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania for his outstanding contribution to the science and art of gardening. In addition, in 2015, John received the American Horticultural Society's highest honor, the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award. The following year he received the Foundation for Landscape Studies Place Maker Award. And in May of 2020, John was scheduled to receive the American Garden Club's Medalist Award.

More than 65 articles have been published about John, the Garden and the Mexican Folk Art Collection, including in the Houston Chronicle, the Financial Times of London, Martha Stewart Living, Horticulture, New York Times, and Arte de Mexico.

In everything John did he strove for perfection. He asked Texas architect Gerald Maffei to design the extraordinary residence that sits within the John Fairey Garden. With its simple open floorplan and glass walls you sit and marvel at the constantly changing landscapes. Seeing and being captivated by the art work of Dixie Friend Gay, in his last days he commissioned and participated with the artist in designing a large mosaic wall to be placed at the Garden's entrance.

John is survived by nieces and nephews who loved him and loved visiting him at the Garden. He is also survived by people who helped him create his masterpieces. Carl Schoenfeld was a constant companion working to expand and make the Garden what it is today. Connie Stegen worked tirelessly with John for decades helping to keep a handle on all the paperwork and on John. Adolfo Silva was always at John's side in the garden, offering his calm and sage advice. And a special thanks to Ron James, one of John's former students, who helped John over these last several years as his health declined. And thank you to all the friends, former students and garden lovers who admired and supported this remarkable man for so many years.

Much of John's legacy will live on as in his gift of the Garden to the John Fairey Garden Conservation Foundation and his outstanding collection of Mexican Folk Art to the Art Museum of Southeast Texas in Beaumont; as well as the lasting impressions he made as a teacher, designer, horticulturist and his sharing of new plants worldwide. Those who wish, may make contributions in his name to the John Fairey Garden Conservancy Foundation, 20559 F.M. 359 Road, Hempstead, Texas 77445.

A celebration of John's life will be held in the John Fairey Garden at a future date to be announced. For more information see [Legacy](#). ■

50th Anniversary EARTH DAY

Although Houston Earth Day celebrations are cancelled we can celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day individually and comply with the Coronavirus Guidelines. We can enjoy the lovely scent of fresh air, watch new seedlings sprout, plant a tree, or simply enjoy companionship with nature



April 22, 2020

from your own space! Another idea is to take a moment to appreciate what you and others are already doing and to personally explore what you may do further today and throughout the coming year to help heal this planet that is our home. May the Earth be with you!

Adapted from websites: The Old Farmer's Almanac and WikiHow

Herbs Make Scents April 2020



**BOOK
C
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If you have suggestions for books others might like, submit your suggestions to Julie Fordes at fordes.julie@gmail.com

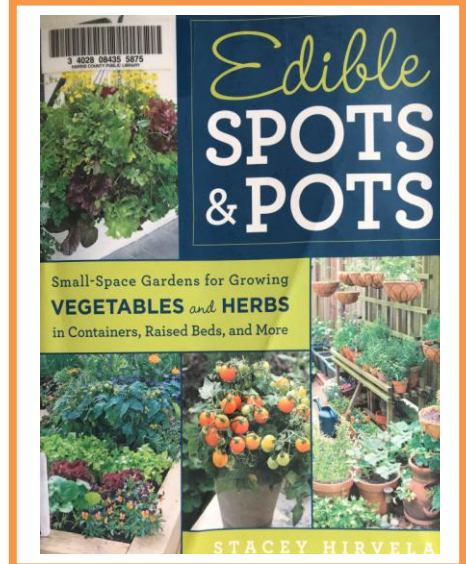


Janice Freeman
Recommends:

**Edible Spots & Pots
by
Stacey Hirvela**

Need a project while you are waiting out the pandemic?

Want to grow your own produce but space is limited?



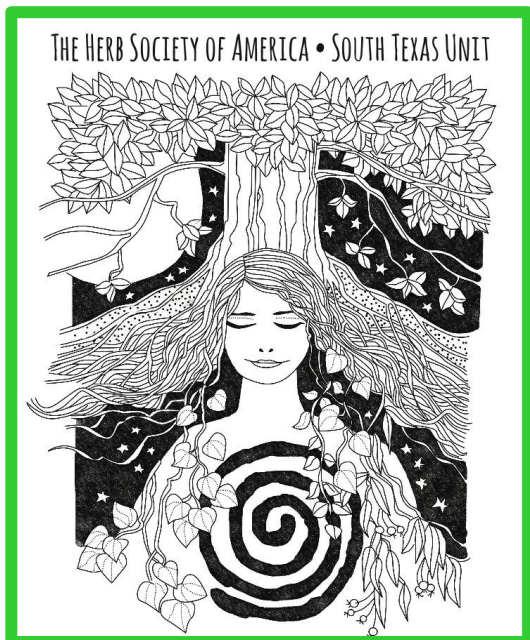
This book is highly recommended for gardeners who are looking for creative ways to garden in containers, raised beds and other surprisingly small spaces. The author begins with the basics - soil, container selection, space options, location, and plant needs. She follows with sixteen budget-friendly projects for the DIY gardener. By following the clear instructions, both the new and the experienced gardener can learn to grow their herbs and vegetables in almost any space. The book is available from the Harris County Library.



Janice Freeman

“April hath put a spirit of youth in everything.”

(Sonnet XCVIII) – William Shakespeare, Shakespeare Sonnets



Back to Our Roots

Julie Fordes

The shelter-in-place mandate has given us the chance to spend more time at home and also in our gardens. I often think back to all of the benefits of gardening that **Dr. Joe Novak** shared with us. It is something I can do to maintain a level of normalcy when so many things in our lives are uncertain.

I try to work outside daily. I am paying lots more attention to the plants than I usually do. While gardening is not a wholly predictable endeavor (there are always surprises and unexpected results) I find the growth of plants comforting.

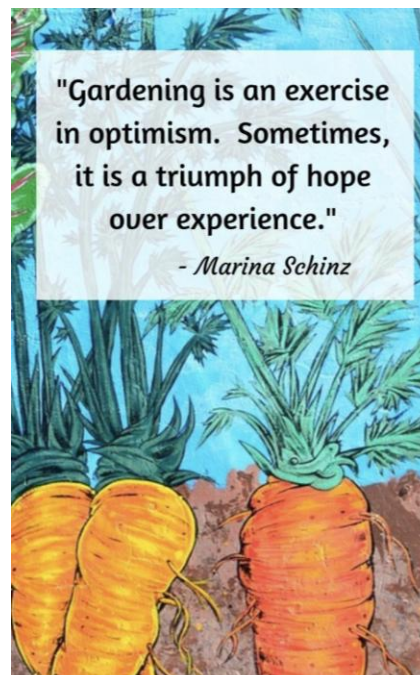
I hope that all of you will use this opportunity to continue to harvest and dry the herbs in your gardens. You should have lemon balm, lemon verbena, mint (hope you have Red Stemmed Apple Mint), oregano, thyme, and rosemary.

It is time to plant some of the warm weather herbs such as lemon grass and basil. Check out **Beth Murphy's** "Monthly To-Do List" on the STU website <http://www.herbsociety-stu.org/monthly-to-do-list.html> to see what other herbs Beth recommends.

Please make an effort to set out holy basil plants and to plant your butterfly pea seeds. Both of these made dried teas that flew off the shelves last November.

Our next chance to sell our herbal products is Herb Fair in November. Because there are about seven months before Herb Fair, we need to pay particular attention to how we store our bounty.

Please make doubly sure that your herbal material is clean and dry. Store it in labeled plastic bags in the freezer until it is time to use it. This applies to all herbs except calendula, which is probably too delicate for the freezer. Dried calendula should instead be stored in plastic bags in a cool, dark place.





**HERB FAIR
2020
Let's Get It Started!**

By the time you receive *Herbs Make Scents* newsletter there will be only 220 days until Herb Fair! And all committee chair positions have been filled except just one - Event Marketing/Social Media Chair.

Be thinking about which committee you would like to join. It's a great chance to learn something new, support our programs, and have fun at the same time!

As **Julie Fordes** mentioned in her newsletter blurb, she and **Pam Harris** are busy working on new craft ideas. Hopefully while we are all "homebound" we can start some of these projects. More on this topic later - stay tuned...

Thinking of all of you during these trying times and hoping you are well.

Enjoy the pictures of my Garden Gnome who is keeping watch over my herbs.

Donna Wheeler



On Duty - The Security Gnome



**Every Garden
Needs a Protector
Who's Keeping
Watch in Yours?**

Janice Freeman



Sparky in the Parsley Bed
Protecting the Parsley

Above is Karen's cat Sparky.

I am happy to showcase a picture of who is keeping watch over your herb garden. Send your picture on or before the monthly newsletter deadline of the 25th to **Janice Freeman**.



“SOMETHING OF BLESSING IN ALL SUFFERING”

A Poem for the Pandemic

by Karen Cottingham

I never thought it would come to this, but to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus known as COVID-19, all of the residents of Harris County and the City of Houston are under an unprecedented stay-at-home order.

Schools are closed, streets are almost empty, and even worship services are either cancelled or live-streamed. “Social distancing” has replaced affectionate hugs, every cough or snuffle sets off an alarm, and hospitals are gearing up for the worst-case scenario.

In times of fear and uncertainty, we naturally seek reassurance and comfort. All of us have our own sources of strength - time spent in prayer, for example, or with family and friends; cooking creatively, perhaps; or even working in the garden. We all gravitate toward what is personally meaningful.

Many, including myself, have found solace and inspiration in art, music, and literature. For me, a particular poem - disarmingly simple, but actually, an impassioned call to change our course now - has resonated so powerfully that I decided to share it in the following pages.



“**And The People Stayed Home**” was written by **Kitty O’Meara** on March 13, 2020 as she contemplated the complexities of the coronavirus pandemic.

Like many, O’Meara had become more and more distressed as she watched the pandemic spread. Dear friends were endangering their own lives caring for desperately ill patients. As anxiety and sadness began to take a toll, her husband suggested she put her thoughts into writing.

For O’Meara, a retired hospital and hospice chaplain, writing is a prayerful collaboration with “The Spirit”. As she explains in her blog, **The Daily Round**, “The Spirit moves in lovely ways, and that’s what we need to stay open to, more than ever” (<https://the-daily-round.com/2020/03/16/in-the-time-of-pandemic/#comments>).

The lines of communication with “The Spirit” were definitely open. O’Meara began to take note of the dramatic reduction in air pollution, first over China, and then over Europe, too, as illness, shut-downs, and quarantines spread. And an idea for a poem came to her:

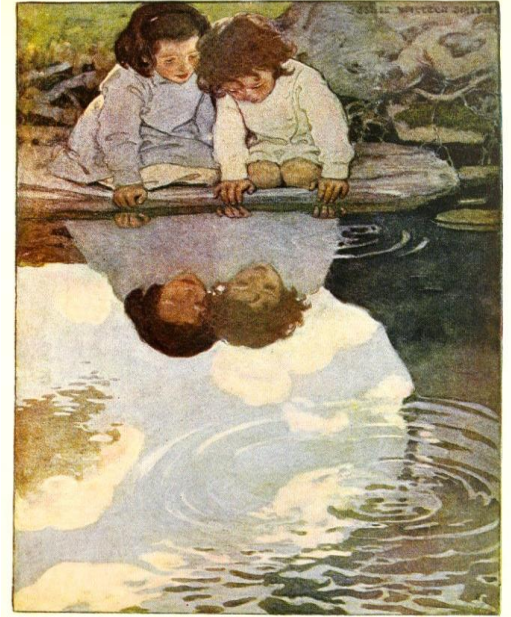
Couldn’t this viral pandemic, while clearly so disruptive and destructive, also present unforeseen opportunities for healing and renewal... for the essential transformation of individuals as well as the environment?



She described her poetic epiphany in a March 19, 2020 interview with Elena Nicolaou for OprahMag.com. "I saw the maps of the [receding pollution over China](#) and Europe. I thought, 'There you go. There's something of blessing in all suffering.' And I thought with my passionate love for the Earth, maybe that's one good thing."

"**And the People Stayed Home**" was written in one sitting - "The Spirit whispered; I was still enough to listen." And within days, O'Meara's gentle yet profound words resonated with appreciative readers all over the world.

In the pages that follow, I have paired each phrase of O'Meara's poem with idyllic images of childhood created by **Jessie Willcox Smith**. Smith was one of the most talented and sensitive illustrators of children's books during The Golden Age of Illustration, the period extending from the 1880s to the 1930s. She was especially known for her vision of childhood as a gentle time of innocence and grace.



Smith's soothing compositions can remind us - if we only let them - of another time and place where days unfolded slowly and peacefully and were filled with simple joys.

I hope we all take this opportunity to fill our own slowed-down days with simple joys and quiet contemplation.

And as Kitty O'Meara might say, "if we are still enough to listen" we might hear something important. Reflect, be still, and let your heart be touched.

And the people stayed home. And they read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And they listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live, and they healed the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Kitty O'Meara, March 13, 2020



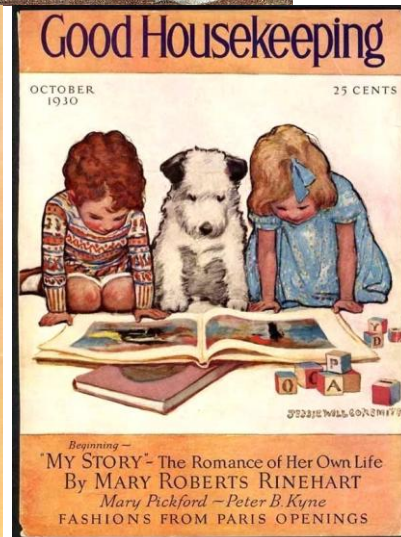
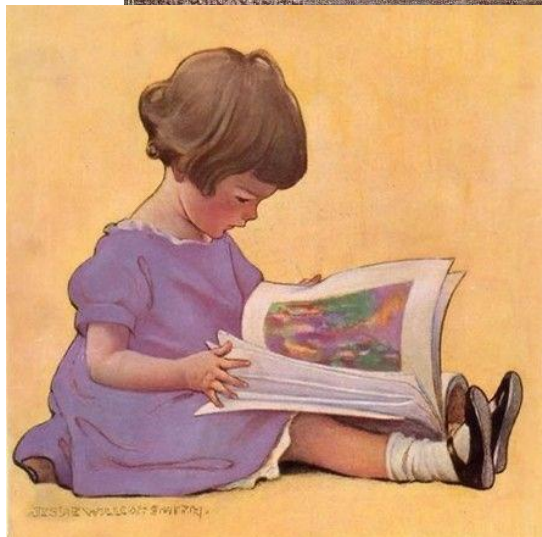
“And the People Stayed Home”

Interpreted by Karen Cottingham

Words by Kitty O’Meara

Illustrations by Jessie Willcox Smith

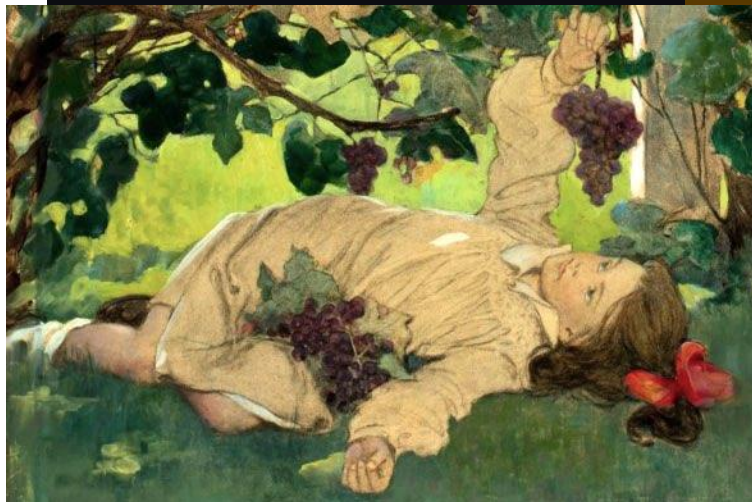
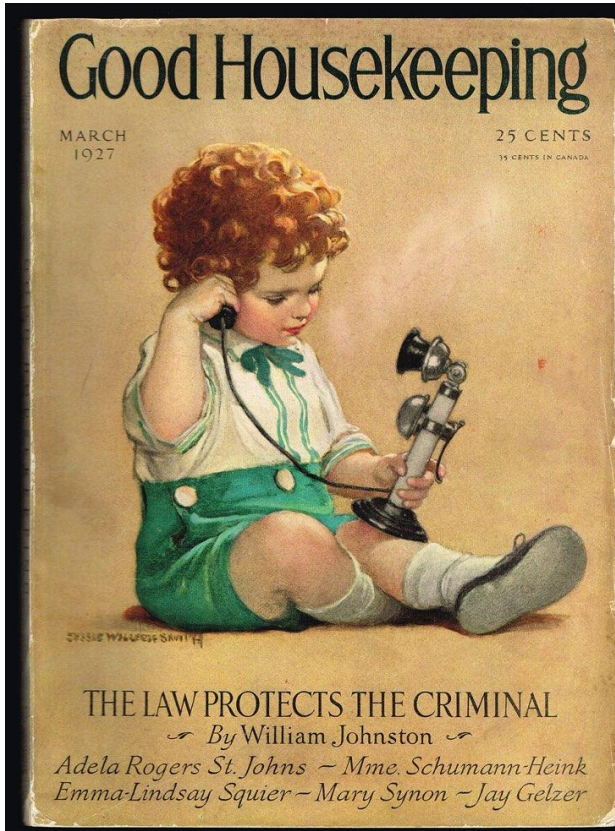
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And read books,



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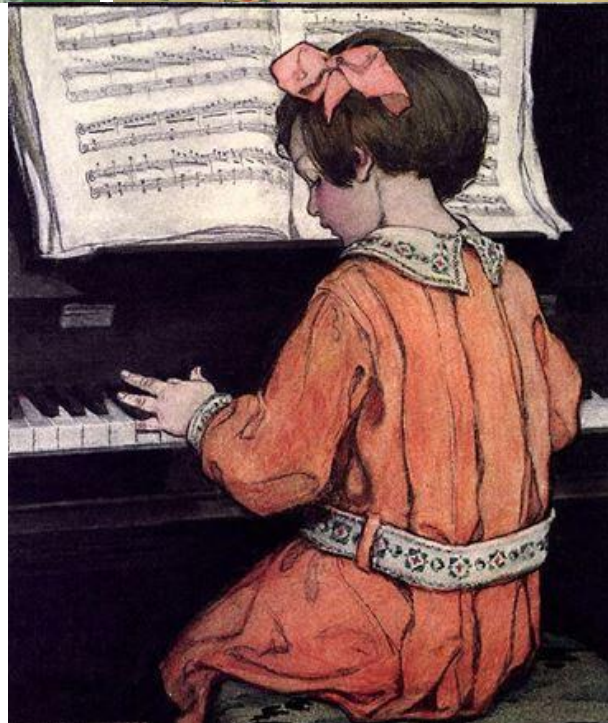
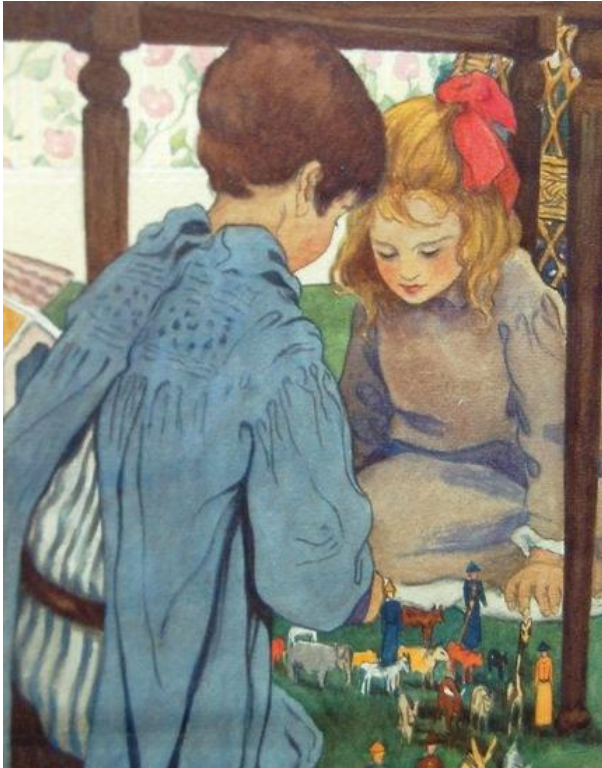
GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
FEBRUARY, 1921 25 CENT!



and made art,



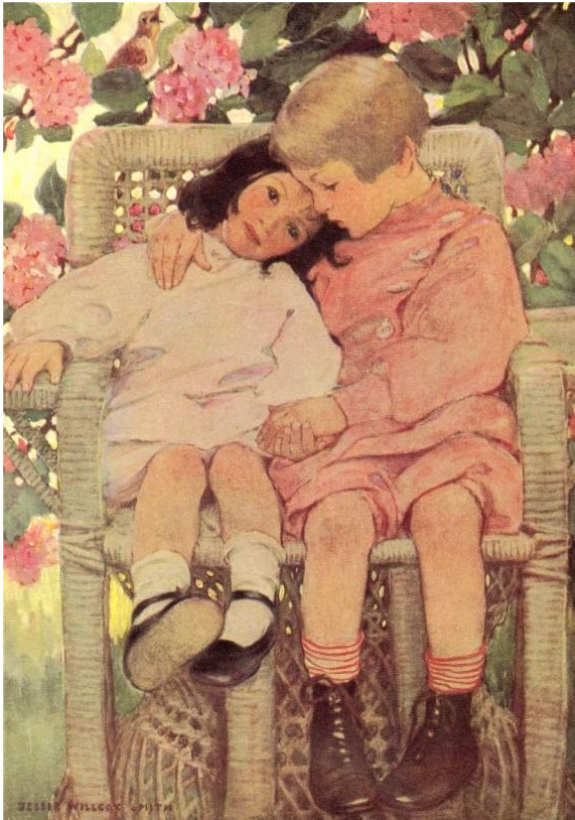
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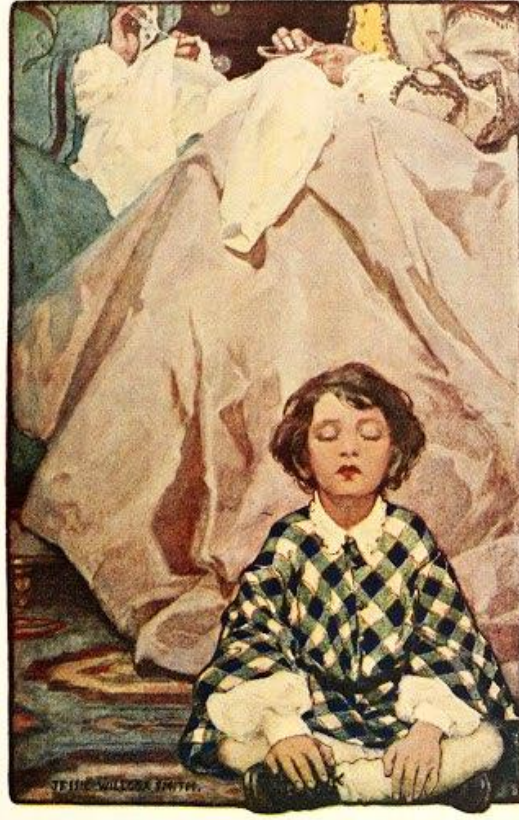
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And listened more deeply.



Some meditated,



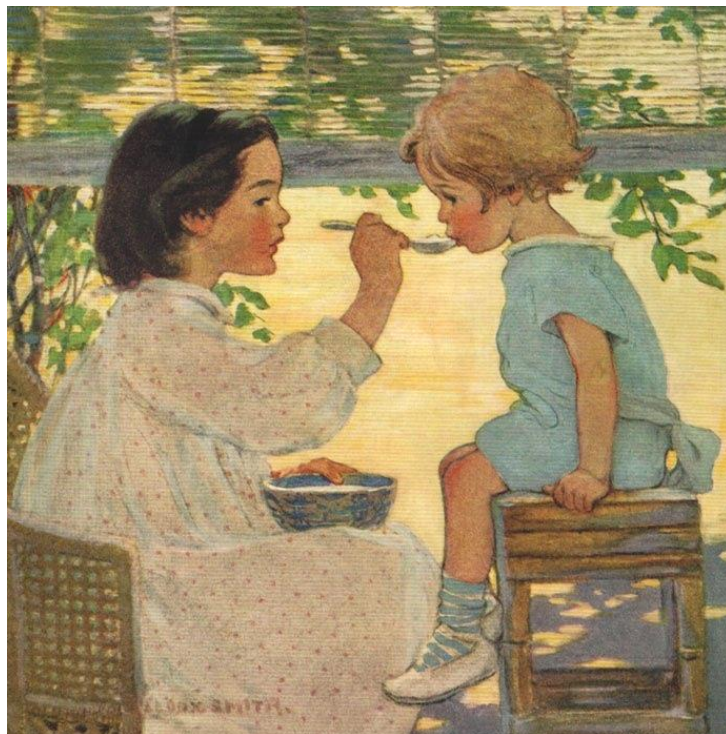
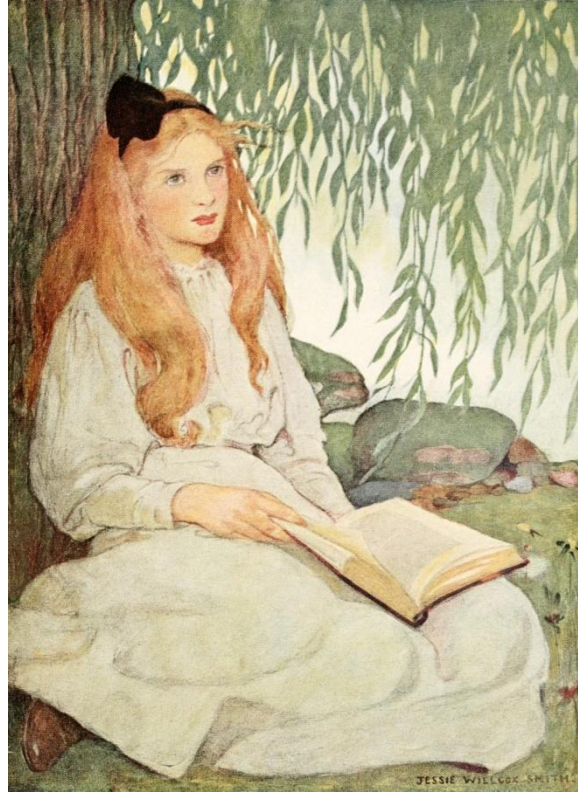
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some danced.



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**And, in the absence of people living in ignorant,
dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways,**



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And when the danger passed,





and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses,



A broken head—and heart.



and made new choices, and dreamed new images,



and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully,



as they had been healed.”

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 through the efforts of our volunteers.

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



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.

