

Herbs Make Scents

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
VOLUME XL, NUMBER 7



SOUTH TEXAS UNIT
JULY 2017

Editor –Linda Alderman ewalderman@comcast.net

July 2017 Calendar

July 11, Tues. at 11 a.m.

Day Meeting – is the annual restaurant trip. This year lunch is at the Flying Dutchman on the Kemah Boardwalk and then a trip to Maas Nursery. Members who wish **may carpool from Lois Jean Howard's home**. Call her in advance at 713-771-0172 and don't forget your **money for lunch**.

July 19, Wed. at 6:30 p.m.

Evening Meeting at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion in Hermann Park (1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004), **Hosted by Susan Wood and Sara Diaz**. Program: *"Herbs in the Headlines"*, presented by Karen Cottingham. **Bring your plate and napkin and a dish to share**.

Aug. 2017 Calendar

No meetings are scheduled. Harvest your gardens for Herb Fair!
Keep an eye on your inbox for any workshop notifications.

Newsletter deadline: 25th of every the month

Happy Birthday!



©wondercliparts.com

1- Nita Rowe
7- Suzanne Wessels
15- Sally Luna
28- Jeanie Dunnihoo

Herbs Needed for Teas!

Lois Jean Howard asks you to harvest the following herbs for teas for Herb Fair.

- Red Stem Apple Mint
- Mexican Mint Marigold
- Lemon Verbena
- Lemon Grass
- Lemon Balm



shutterstock - 136152794



shutterstock - 136152794



Chairman's Corner

Greetings,

As newly elected Unit Chair I would like to share a bit about myself. I am a native Houstonian, eldest of four girls and spent my early years not too far from Hermann Park. I began working for the Prudential Insurance Company as an underwriting clerk and then a travel and conference planner for most of my 20's and 30's. I married Ken after a long courtship and our only child was born when we lived on San Jacinto Street. I would push Dena in the baby jogger every day to the Rose Garden, Herb Garden and the zoo (it was still free then). Those early years were such a gift and I treasure the memories.

I became a La Leche League leader and co-led two support groups for over 16 years. We moved to become homeowners and I had a yard in which to garden; herbs, vegetables, flowers and the 3 box turtles I kept for years. I began volunteering at Poe Cooperative Preschool when Dena enrolled at Poe Elementary and have continued teaching. Currently, I volunteer at Blossom Heights Child Development Center.

I have many interests and passions, ranging from church and archdiocesan board commitments to chairing the 4th of July neighborhood picnic. I am a co-founder of HUG (Houston Urban Gardeners), a free monthly group meeting with a variety of speakers that support Houstonians growing their own food and eating more local produce. I just began volunteering with Second Servings; Houston's only prepared food rescue organization.

I say YES more often than not, which can result in a grumpy husband. I am constantly juggling desires and obligations, opting for the fullest plate. I am looking forward to my new venture with HSA – STU. There is the 50th Anniversary

of the Unit to plan & celebrate, our fundraising Herb Fair, the beautiful & educational Herb Day and maintaining the membership which has increased over the past couple years. I have no desire to change anything – just maintain the integrity and history of our organization and move forward with tweaks and some fresh ideas.

Warmly,
Donna Yanowski
Unit Chair



Status of Garden Donations

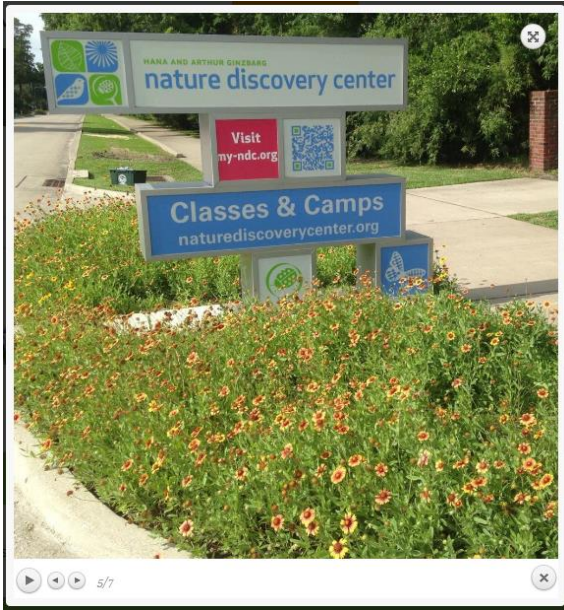
At the Annual meeting in May members voted to contribute \$700 to public gardens, to take a month to research possible new recipients for these funds, and to make a decision at the June Meeting, now postponed to the September meeting. Members presented four possibilities:

- The Sensory Garden at Russ Pitman Park in Bellaire, TX
- The gardens at Festival Hill in Round Top, TX
- Recipe for Success
- The sensory garden at the Sight into Sound Radio Broadcasting Studio

Since there were only 15 members present the June meeting, there was a motion by Lucia Bettler to delay the vote until September. The motion was seconded by Beth Murphy and the vote was unanimous to delay the decision until the September meeting.

Look for more information about these gardens in this newsletter.

Sally Luna
Past Unit Chair



Russ Pitman Park in Bellaire

I propose that the HSA - South Texas Unit make a 2017-2018 donation to the Hana and Arthur Ginzberg Nature Discovery Center Sensory/Herb Garden. In 1986 Hana Ginzberg asked me to help plan and install a sensory herb garden at Russ Pitman Park. Since then, I have watched it develop into a beautiful and educational resource in Bellaire. Hana rightly felt that the garden would add to the sensory experiences for the many children and families that would visit the Nature Discovery Center in Russ Pitman Park. The garden has been cared for by members of the Bellaire Garden Club and has been completely rebuilt during the last year.

The Sensory/Herb Garden is part of the outdoor curriculum taught by the naturalists who lead the school children on nature walks through the park. They continue to the Pollinator Garden which is next to the Sensory Garden and to the outdoor Critter Classroom which has separate habitats for the rabbits, Dusty and Licorice, the 2 box turtles, and the 3 Northern Bobwhite Quail. Then they continue on to the new boardwalk in the Prairie Wetland which leads to the winding path of the Pocket Prairie. Further on down the pathway they learn about the ecology of the Cypress Pond

Since we do not have a Unit herb garden at present, I feel that supporting this garden is a way to support our mission of educating about the wonders of herbs for the next generations. I would like to invite everyone to come and visit the Nature Discovery Center in Russ Pitman Park at 7112 Newcastle in Bellaire, Texas. I think that you'll agree with me that Hana and Art's vision of a preserved natural jewel in the middle of the city has been realized.

Submitted by: Beth Murphy



From the Treasurer's Desk: Janice Stuff

Remit your membership dues during June and July, deadline August 1.

- \$67.50, single**
- \$98.75 joint membership**
- \$80.00 Sustaining**

Mail to Janice Stuff, Treasurer
P.O. Box 6515
Houston, TX 77265-6515
Questions? jestuff@pdq.net

Recipe for Success

If there is sufficient interest in considering Recipe for Success as a recipient of one of our charitable donations, I will submit a proposal by email before the September meeting; however, this organization appears to be already very well-funded.

Submitted by: Karen Cottingham



Lavender Garden at Festival Hill

Not far from the Texas country town of Roundtop, lies a little bit of heaven on earth, on the grounds of Festival Hill---music conservatory and brain child of James Dick. Once you turn onto Jaster Road, and turn right to view the Menke House, you'll realize you have stumbled upon a unique grouping of gardens, envisioned by the great herb lady of Texas, Madalene Hill.

Along with the help of the Pioneer Unit of the Herb Society of America, Henry Flowers, the head horticulturist, keeps the gardens thriving and beautiful. Of course, like all gardens, they are forever in progress. Whenever we go there for the Herbal Forum each March, we never know what might be blooming, or what might have been hit hard by frost or a deluge of Spring rain.

However it appears, the love that goes into these gardens is always evident. The gardens are known throughout the country, and many famous herbal authors have come there to share their herbal wisdom. Originally known as the McAshan Herb Garden, and there are now many separate gardens planted with botanical specimens gathered from around the world. Madalene had friends from everywhere who shared rare cuttings with her.

There are the Terrace Gardens, with perennial herbs, roses, and small trees. The Shakespeare Garden has many of the plants mentioned in Shakespeare's plays and literary works. There are often programs that utilize the research of the actors at Winedale, to illustrate the beauty of his poetry and symbolism.

The Pharmacy or medicinal herb garden was indeed a labor of love. There are rare plants from Africa, Mexico, Asia, Europe and more. I remember Madalene sending me to the Botanical Gardens in Padua when I went to Italy, to get a glimpse of another famous Physic garden.

My own personal favorite is the Cloister Garden. Imagine a clear spring day, melodious harp music drifting through the garden...as we give our blessing to these healing plants. They have created a place that makes you think you are in a medieval stone garden in France. Here are many flowers and herbs dedicated to the Virgin Mary, columbine, maidenhair fern, roses, calendula and more.

Also admired, is the extensive lavender garden, next to it, with many varieties of rocky soil loving lavenders.

You simply must go there to experience the wonders of this unique and beautiful spot---a combination of earth, stone, water, sunshine and rain.

It is pure poetry in the heart of Texas.

Submitted by: Lucia Ferrara Bettler





SIGHT INTO SOUND RADIO'S SENSORY GARDEN



Did you know that there is a lovely Sensory Garden at the Sight into Sound Radio Broadcasting Studio on Essex St. near Westheimer and Wesleyan? The studio is where dedicated volunteers record and broadcast newspaper articles and other “reading” material for their visually-impaired clients.

I first became aware of this special garden through an article by **Brenda Beust Smith** in the June 2, 2017 online edition of *Lazy Gardener & Friends Houston Garden Newsletter*. The following is excerpted from Brenda’s article:

A huge tip o’ the trowel to [Sight into Sound Radio](#), the late Otto Schlamme, Carol Pierce, Rice University students and many others whose efforts have resulted in a Sensory Garden that is a treasure to both community and those who treasure the services of this unusual nonprofit broadcast station.

The small garden enlivens the [Sight into Sound Radio](#) headquarters at 3935 Essex. From this near west side Houston site, Sight into Sound uses radio broadcasting to enrich the lives of those with reading challenges, including a full radio schedule with the Chronicle, periodicals and book hour, plus custom recordings and audio description services.

Now, thanks to their new open-to-the-world Sensory Garden, Sight into Sound also brings a renewing bit of nature to its patrons as well as its neighborhood, a concentrated area of apartments and office buildings. The plantings started in 2013 as a way to let patrons use their senses of touch, smell, hearing and taste to experience nature, thanks to a bequest by longtime supporter Otto Schlamme, Janet said. Station Volunteer Coordinator Carol Pierce recruited Rice University students to build the garden from the ground up.

Individuals and groups of visitors have visited to walk the winding crushed granite pathways in an easy-to-navigate environment.

The Sight into Sound garden would be an excellent choice to receive a 2017 charitable donation from the HSA-STU. I know these wonderful people would also appreciate a donation of time, plants, or expertise to further develop this lovely and inspirational garden. With so many sweetly-scented and aromatic herbs to choose from, sensory gardens and herbs are natural partners. Some of our members may even personally benefit from a charitable collaboration with Sight into Sound Radio and become experienced in designing and creating sensory gardens themselves.

Submitted by: **Karen Cottingham**



L to R -Touch: lambs ear, **Scent:** popcorn plant (*Cassia alata*), roses, Mexican mint marigold, and **Taste:** herbs such as rosemary



About Our Meetings . . .

Albert Ramos

April showers bring May flowers, but what did June 21 of 2017 bring? If you said, “The Summer Solstice”, you’d be right. But if you said, “SUPER HERBS AND SUPER SPICES: CHIA”, then you were one of the fifteen members and eighteen guests who were so fortunate to attend our June evening meeting with its wonderful presentation by **Haley Bowen**.

Haley - an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, yoga instructor, Reiki Master, and studio artist - presented one of the most professional, substantive, and interesting programs we’ve had this year. Chia, more formally known as *Salvia hispanica*, has a 5,500 year-long history of use in Mexico and Central America. Its value in the lives of Aztecs and Mayans ranged from food for the body to food for the soul and from the medicinal to the artistic. Haley’s slide show beautifully illustrated chia’s ancient history and cultural significance.

Chia made its modern American debut in the mid-1970s with the introduction of the “Chia Pet”. These were boxed kits of chia seeds and a small, hollow terra-cotta figurine with a grooved body sold primarily in Walgreens drug stores. Starting in 1977, the Chia Pet commercials hooked Americans with the tag line, “*The pottery that grows!*” Potential buyers were beguiled by the simplicity of sprouting their own Chia Pets: “Soak your chia; spread the seeds; and watch it grow!” And we’ve watched the manufacturer’s sales grow right along with them. More than 20 million Chia Pets have been sold since that first 30-second commercial.

Chia advanced beyond cultural kitsch with the publication of Christopher McDougall’s 2009 book, *Born to Run - A Hidden Tribe, Superathletes and the Greatest Race the World Has Never Seen*. The author’s assertion that the super-endurance of the long distance runners was due to their consumption of chia seeds was later found to be incorrect, but not before chia seed sales accelerated at a speed that would have impressed the endurance runners!

But just because chia does not give us super-endurance does not mean it is not a Super Herb

and Superfood. Haley explained to us that chia seeds are an excellent source of protein, are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, and provide essential calcium, vitamins, and important anti-oxidants. She even discreetly mentioned that the undigestible fiber in chia seeds has health benefits for our digestion.

Haley also reminded us that it takes more than an occasional sprinkle of chia seeds to confer a measurable health benefit. As **Karen Cottingham** indicated in a newsletter article last month, sometimes a snack is just a snack, even when it is well-packaged and well-marketed as a health food.

Thank you, Haley, for your thoughtful, informative, and entertaining program.



Adding to the evening, our potluck supper was a bounty of super food! Members and guests brought dishes accented with chia as well as Mexican or Central American dishes that paid tribute to the original sites of chia cultivation. Notable amongst the foods were **Elizabeth Grandich’s** Greek yogurt with *outstanding* homemade fig preserves and topped with chia seeds; **Karen Cottingham’s** delicious chia chocolate chip muffins (all 48 of them disappeared without a trace; but that’s OK because they were “healthy”); **Sally Luna’s** deeply flavorful Brussel sprout salad with chia seed topping; and **Haley Bowen’s** selection of savory chia crackers, chia energy bars, chia chocolate pudding, and refreshing chia *agua fresca* (chia seeds in water with a splash of lemon).

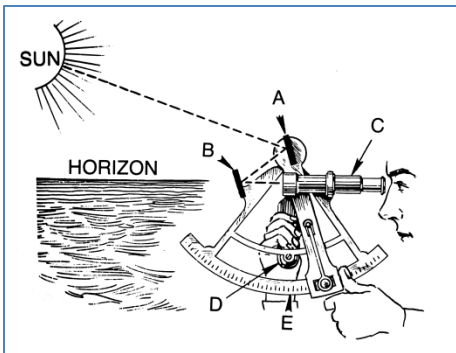


I started my meal with dessert, but I didn't notice chia seeds topping any of them. But what the desserts lacked in "health" was outweighed by their sweet and delicious flavors. I'll bet some of you were thinking they were just outweighed in pounds! I particularly enjoyed **Bobby Jucker's** national award-winning Key Lime Pie. Thank you everyone for contributing to our feast.

Lucia Bettler and **Kerry Madole** were tonight's hostesses and did a lovely job of decorating the meeting space. Since chia is native to Mexico, Central America, and the desert-southwest of the United States, they decorated the dining and buffet tables with a beautiful selection of Mexican textiles and *objetos de arte* from Lucia's collection. And Kerry made a tasty and energizing "ginger ale and fresh fruit" drink as well as a Mexican *horchata* drink. Thank you, Lucia and Kerry, for helping make our meeting place such a pleasant venue.

Lucky recipients of tonight's door prizes were members **Mary Sacilowski** and **Donna Fay Hilliard** as well as one of the guests. They had their choice of specialty coffees donated by **Bobby Jucker** of *Three Brothers Bakery* and a gift basket of herbal teas donated by our new HSA-STU President, **Donna Yanowski**. We're very fortunate to have such generous members who gladly contribute door prizes for our meetings.

Be sure to come to our July 19, 2017 evening meeting when **Karen Cottingham** presents HERBS IN THE HEADLINES. I know it will be another outstanding HSA-STU event!



Member **Linda Alderman** earned a Basic Celestial Navigation Endorsement



Evelyn's Park - Bellaire, TX

Thelma Rowe and Janice Stuff

June 13, 2017 was "Picnic in the Park"; Evelyn's Park, in Bellaire, TX.

The day group sat at a picnic table under a pavilion in the shade for the meeting. There were announcements, a time for sharing, enjoying lunch and the park! Folks could bring their own lunch or food was available for purchase at the concession stand.

Some members walked around the guided paths enjoying the plantings; a significant number of trees are planted and marked with labels of the common and botanical names!

The day group is still looking for someone to volunteer to chair this group during the coming year. Lois Jean Howard has done an exceptional job! Feel free to call her and find out just how easy it is to do this job, then volunteer!





What's Coming Up Next?

HERBS IN THE HEADLINES

Karen Cottinham

How often do you open your newspaper or your online news source and find herbs in the headlines? Herbs actually do make headline news, and more often than many of us might imagine. Simply by keeping up with the news over the past year, I have assembled a “crazy-quilt” miscellany of curious, surprising, inspiring, amusing, and fascinating news articles. And they are all about herbs and the people who found uses for them that can make our lives better, healthier, and more interesting.

Here is a small sample of some of the intriguing articles I found: “therapeutic” clothing made from fabric infused with medicinal *Ayurvedic* herbs; herbal self-medication by birds, insects, and mammals; promotion of saffron cultivation in Afghanistan as a replacement for the poppies grown for narcotics; and a specially-developed chili pepper so potent it might one day be used as a topical anesthetic for surgery in third-world countries.

With these and so many other interesting articles to choose from, my biggest challenge was in deciding which ones should make the cut for our July 19, 2017 Evening Program, HERBS IN THE HEADLINES. Headlines that are effective entice and engage the reader with provocative wording, and these are the ones that made me want to learn more:

Could Ancient Remedies Hold the Answer to the Looming Antibiotic Crisis? - The New York Times Magazine (September 14, 2016);

Brazilian Pepperberry Packs Power to Knock Out Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria - The American Association for the Advancement of Science EurekaAlert (February 10, 2017);

How a Secret Chinese Military Drug Based on an Ancient Herb Won the Nobel Prize - Washington Post (October 6, 2015); and

Garlic, Onions and Cow Stomach: A Medieval Solution for Modern Superbugs - IFL Science (March 31, 2015).

What do these provocatively-titled herbal “breaking news” stories have in common?

- They all address the increasingly serious issue of antibiotic-resistant *Superbugs*;
- They all feature researchers who searched for answers in unconventional places – in the Amazon rain forest; in ancient Chinese herbal texts; and in a medieval Anglo Saxon “Leechbook”. (Doctors used to be called “leeches”!)
- And most importantly, there is an inspiring story to tell about each of the researchers.

First consider Cassandra Quave, PhD. Dr. Quave is an intrepid ethnobotanist who, despite the amputation of a leg in childhood, explores the depths of the Amazon rain forest and hikes to remote mountainous regions in Europe. What compels her to undertake these arduous activities? Dr. Quave is on a quest to gather traditional herbal knowledge and plant materials from isolated regions to look for possible medicinal applications. Her investigation of the Brazilian pepperberry (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) was inspired by a Peruvian *curandero* who, like generations of traditional healers before him, uses this tropical plant to treat skin infections. In her laboratory, Dr. Quave isolated a potent extract that prevents the usually virulent, and sometimes even deadly, drug-resistant *Staphylococcus* from damaging tissues. Apparently, the peppertree extract prevents the bacteria from releasing the toxins that make it so deadly. Ironically, Dr. Quave was already familiar with Brazilian pepperberry from growing up in Florida, where that same plant is designated an invasive weed!





Another inspiring scientist is Youyou Tu, a Chinese pharmacologist who also trained in Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine. In the 1960s she was selected to work on a secret Chinese military mission known only as “Code Name 523”. Her urgent assignment was to find a new treatment for the antibiotic-resistant malaria that was ravaging Mao’s Communist army. Seeking insights from ancient Chinese medical writings, she systematically screened over two thousand herbal recipes from antiquity. What Tu found in the vial labeled “Extract 191” became the most widely prescribed antibiotic for malaria, saving millions of lives over the last several decades. For her discovery, Tu was awarded the 2015 Nobel Prize in Medicine. And which herb was the star of this thrilling drama? It was the lowly roadside weed the Chinese call *qin hao*, known to Westerners as Sweet Annie (*Artemisia annua*).

copper and splash of bovine bile - all fermented in wine for nine days - outperformed the most effective standard antibiotic for drug-resistant *Staphylococcus* infections!”



Join us on July 19 for HERBS IN THE HEADLINES and learn about the dedicated researchers who not only found their inspiration in herbs, but excelled at applying traditional herbal knowledge to contemporary medical problems. This program is designed for the curious - though not necessarily scientific - herbal enthusiast. It is also a great opportunity to expose young people to meaningful and exciting careers that they might not otherwise consider. Please invite a child or young adult and introduce them to the powerful and highly relevant applications of herbal knowledge to the challenges of modern life.

And finally, we will explore the powerful intellectual synergy that came about when two scholars on opposite ends of the academic spectrum found common ground for collaboration. Dr. Christina Lee, an Anglo-Saxon History and Language specialist at England’s University of Nottingham, studies medieval concepts of illness and has translated a 10th century compendium of medical treatments. And Dr. Freya Harrison, a young microbiologist, studies the collaborative behavior and communication systems of bacteria. How on earth did these two scholars decide to work together? Well, it all started with Dr. Harrison’s desire for authenticity as a “weekend warrior” in Viking historical re-enactments! And with a world famous Viking medievalist also on campus, who else should she ask for advice? One thing led to another, and soon Drs. Harrison and Lee were re-creating a 10th century antibacterial salve in the lab. Much to their surprise, their concoction of onion and garlic with a pinch of

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 Street 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. We’ll see you on July 19!



Herbally Speaking...

...from the desk of Linda Alderman

I think one of the most delightful culinary combinations is chives with eggs. This just might mean the sum is greater than the parts! Former math teachers often find ways to toss math references in our conversations; we just can't help it! Chives add a delicate onion flavor to soups, sauces and stir-fries. I even use the gorgeous mauve-colored blooms for a soft pink color in my flavored vinegars. It's time for an omelet sprinkled with chives, while I plan which herbs to start harvesting for this year's batch of herbal vinegars. Yum!

Chives *Allium schoenoprasum* **Liliaceae**



Description: Like all onions, chives are bulb plants, although the bulbs are so tiny you may not realize they are there. The hollow green leaves and the flowering stems shoot up from the bulbs. The

small pale purple flowers form dense, globular umbel at the top of the stem. The petals are up to 1/2 in long with bluish purple anthers. The leaves are dark green, very slender, cylindrical and hollow. They grow 6 – 10 in high and surround the stem at the base of the plant and taper to a point at the top.

A little History: For nearly 5,000 years chives have been added to foods. They are native to the Old World and were probably first used the ancient Greeks. By the 16th century, chives were cultivated in European herb gardens. Interestingly many modern cultivars carry German names, e.g. 'Grosser Riesen' and 'Feiner Schnittlauch.' Chives came to America with the settling of the colonies.

Cultivation: Like most herbs **onion chives** like a light, rich, moist soil. They grow slowly from seed. I found small plants readily available in garden centers and I have planted them in the spring & fall. While they can take nearly a year to reach maturity, they should be cut back frequently to promote growth. Generally, not an issue in our area, onion chives will not tolerate draught. Established plants do need to be divided and I have tried to do that about every third year. The tops will die back in the winter, and since I mulch nearby plants, along with the chives, they start right back up in the spring. I

would be remiss, if I didn't mention **garlic chives** (*Allium tuberosum*) as they are very similar to onion chives. They are much larger and have flat leaves rather than the hollow, tubular ones. Cultivation and culinary uses are the same, although garlic chives are much stronger. Be careful; add a little at a time. Another word of caution—they are invasive! Yes, I found out the hard way. I had a horrible time trying to reclaim a bed overrun with them! When you are a new herb gardener, you don't always know the right questions to ask. So, my garlic chives are now in containers.

Uses: Culinary – Cooking usually destroys the delicate flavor, so finely chopped chives are sprinkled on before serving or in recipes where cooking isn't required.

- To preserve chives, chop them and freeze with a bit of water
- Add chives to mayonnaise and salad dressings
- Chives pair well with potato or cheese dishes

Avocado Egg Salad with Chives

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 1/2 Tbl. fresh lemon juice
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and diced
- 2 Tbl. finely chopped celery
- 2 Tbl. minced fresh chives
- 1Tbl Dijon-style mustard
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste.

In a medium bowl, mash avocado and lemon juice together with a fork until smooth. Gently stir in remaining ingredients. Adjust seasonings as desired, Serve immediately or refrigerate.

Resources:

- Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Herbs
- Southern Herb Growing by Madalene Hill & Gwen Barclay
- Herb Gardens 2017 Calendar by Maggie Oster
- The Encyclopedia of Herbs by Art Tucker & Tom Debaggio

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



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 – July 2017