



La Yerba Buena

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

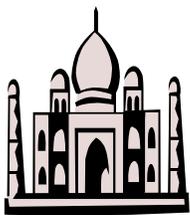
NUMBER 217, APRIL 2008

Be sure to view the unedited version of this newsletter @ www.sanantonioherbs.org

If you would like to receive the SAHS newsletter electronically, please contact Lyn @ belisle@satx.rr.com

The San Antonio Herb Society is organized to bring together those who are interested in using and growing herbs and to promote general knowledge of herbs to the membership and the public at large.

April Program



**Herb and Spice Blends for
Healthy Indian Cuisine**

Thursday, April 10th, 6:30 p.m.



Join us on April 10th as our own Diane Lewis shares healthy recipes and tips on how to get the best flavor out of herbs and spices used in Indian cuisine. Enjoy the aroma of smoky cumin, warm cinnamon, spicy ginger, bay leaves, and other spices as Diane demonstrates how to make *garam masala* spice blend. Learn about the health benefits of turmeric, chili peppers, cardamom, fennel, coriander, and other spices as she demonstrates how to create a customized *curry powder* to taste. Sample delicious dishes seasoned with these spice blends and others laced with fresh mint and cilantro, including delicious *pappadums with mango chutney*, *cucumber raita*, *tandoori chicken*, and *vegetable curry*. Learn how to grow fresh herbs in your garden to create these healthy and flavorful dishes at home!

Diane Lewis is a former San Antonio Herb Society Programs VP. She completed a BS in Medical Technology from the University of Missouri, an AAS with honors in Landscaping and Horticulture from Palo Alto College, and a certificate of achievement from John C. Campbell Folk School as a student of International Vegetarian Cooking. Diane currently teaches health-oriented herb cooking, gardening, and landscape design classes at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens for the Northeast Independent School District; visit www.communityed.neisd.net

The program will begin at 7:00 (with refreshments served beginning at 6:30) at the San Antonio Garden Center, located on the corner of Funston and N. New Braunfels. The meeting is free and open to the public. For more information, check out our website at www.sanantonioherbs.org

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Members with the last names starting with **R-Z** please bring refreshments to the January meeting. Please be sure to bring some finger foods to share. If you miss your turn, please bring them the following month.

Email your recipe to: karyrebecca@yahoo.com and we'll likely publish it in the next newsletter.



TUSSIE MUSSIES....



...to **Lyn Belisle** who had the idea to update the SAHS Resource Guide. Lyn is overseeing the committee, designing graphics, coordinating it all...We know it will be a wonderful and useful resource for herb growers. We thank you, Lyn, for all you do for the SAHS and for spearheading this project.



JOIN THE GREEN TEAM

If you are willing to receive your newsletter electronically, please contact Lyn Belisle @ belisle@satx.rr.com to sign up. Advantages? Receive the newsletter before everyone else; all photos are in color (so your newsletter really looks great when printed); and it saves our SAHS valuable resources, such as stamps & paper.

GO!!! GREEN!!! GO!!!

Member Recipes

Lebanese Caviar (a.k.a. Black Fava Bean Dip)

submitted by Rebecca Kary

1¼ cups cooked fava beans (I used a smaller, darker variety available in Middle Eastern markets)
2 cloves of garlic, mashed
Juice of 2 lemons
1–2 tablespoons of tahini (sesame paste), to taste
A few sprigs of fresh thyme
Generous splash of olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Blend all the ingredients in a food processor. If the mixture is too stiff, you may add some liquid from the cooked fava beans and/or some more olive oil. Hint: If too acidic from the lemon juice, add a little salt until the flavors are perfectly balanced.

You may serve the dip with olive oil drizzled on top.

To cook fava beans:

Soak in water overnight. Simmer in fresh water until tender. Add a pinch of baking of soda to help your beans get tender. The package generally gives you the cooking tips.

Shaved Carrot and Pear Salad with Curry Vinaigrette

submitted by Jean Dukes

Recipe courtesy Giada De Laurentiis / Everyday Italian

1 1/2 pound large carrots, trimmed and peeled (about 8 carrots)
2 firm pears (recommended: D'Anjou)
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley leaves
2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
1 Tbsp. curry powder
2 tsp. honey
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil



Using a vegetable peeler cut the carrots lengthwise into thin ribbons or slices. Quarter, core, and stem the pears. Using a knife, slice into very thin strips. Place the carrot and pear slices in a large bowl with the chopped parsley.

In a blender combine the white wine, curry powder, honey, salt, and pepper and blend to combine. With the machine running add the olive oil. Pour the dressing over the carrots and pears. Toss to combine and serve immediately.

Do You Have A SAHS Name Tag?

HELLO!



Welcome to
the
SAHS

If you have attended at least three Herb Society meetings you are eligible for a free nametag. If you do not have one, please contact Carol Hamling, Membership Chairman. You can email her at

obith@satx.rr.com

or fill out a nametag form at the sign in desk before any monthly meeting. Please remember to wear your SAHS to every meeting & event! Thank you.



Hat...and SHOE Competition for the King William Parade This Month!



A SAHS Fiesta Tradition

The San Antonio Herb Society has been approved to participate in the King William Parade on Saturday, April 26, so the competition is on! We're going head to head and toe to toe in competition for the most beautiful, most humorous, and most creative decorated hats and shoes for the King William Parade on April 26.

Bring your herbally and Fiesta decorated hats and shoes to the SAHS April meeting—please arrive with your hat by 6:30. Members will vote for their favorite hat and shoes, and the King/Queen, Prince/Princess, and Duke/Duchess of Herbs will be selected.

The theme of this year's parade is poetry. Combine that with herbs if you want. Decorate your hats and/or shoes in any way you want: something serious, elaborate, zany, or humorous. Your hat can be made of any material you choose—living (continued on next page)

Report on the March Meeting

Announcements:

Diane Lewis will be speaking on herb and spice blends for healthy Indian cuisine at our next meeting on April 10.

Frankie announced she would be out of town in April, so two members volunteered to help with hospitality.

Carol Hamling suggested that new members check with her upon arrival at meetings to see if their new name tags are in. She also introduced the new share table where members can bring things to share and give away, whether baskets or seeds or cuttings. No money is to change hands. The first share table was a great success.

Main program:

Speaker Tom Harris, Ph.D., showed us a short film from Mel Bartholomew, the originator of the concept of Square Foot Gardening. He elaborated on the “no work, no weeds, no digging, no kidding” approach to gardening and showed us how to prepare the beds, mix the soil, and plant the herbs, vegetables, and flowers in a sustainable way. The only tools you will need are a trowel, a pencil, and scissors!

Download his valuable handouts online: <http://www.sanantonioherbs.org/08march/handouts.htm>

You can get information on spring planting dates, veggie varieties, and 10 steps to square foot gardening.

Tom is available to do yard audits. He will tell you what’s wrong with your yard and how to fix it, as well as which plant is which, and where best to place them.

Tom also has a book and calendar out. They really tailor the information and advice on gardening in our region:

52 Weeks of Gardening

The Hill Country Gardener’s 2008 Calendar/Journal

Tom also brought copies of the updated best-selling book by Mel Bartholomew for purchase:

All New Square Foot Gardening: Grow More in Less Space?

Visit Tom’s website to sign up for a yard audit or his newsletter (*Gardening in Spades*): www.thehillcountrygardener.com. You can also see a variety of gardening classes and events listed there.

(King William Parade continued from previous page) herb plants or flowers, or silk ones from a local crafts store. It can include pictures of your gardening, your family members, or it can boast your college or school affiliation. And it can be as high and as wide as your head can possibly carry.

If your hat or shoes are chosen, you will have a special place of honor on our float (we could even have a King, Prince or Duke of Herbs, so men, don’t feel like you can’t participate)! Remember, this annual event is one of the wackiest and most delightful ways to share your enthusiasm for herbs, not to mention LOADS of fun.

So, surprise us! There ARE prizes to be won and a royal Fiesta title to be earned, and you will be enthroned on our King William Parade float.

The KW Parade will be on Saturday, April 26. For more information, visit <http://www.kwfair.org/parade/index.htm>

For all who plan to participate, we will have a brief planning meeting following the April meeting. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST SIGN A WAIVER FORM, WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THAT TIME. Save time at the meeting by downloading and signing yours

ahead of time: <http://www.kwfair.org/parade/08paradewaiver.pdf>. You will be asked to arrive the morning of the parade (details to follow) by 8 a.m. to help decorate our float. The parade rolls at 10 a.m., and the parade lineup starts as early as 7:30 a.m.

Feel free to contact Rebecca at (210) 200-8512 or at karyrebecca@yahoo.com if you have any questions.





SAWS Spring Bloom Giveaway

Saturday, March 15, was a beautiful morning. Pleasant, cool, some nice breezes. Arriving at the crack of dawn (OK, 8:00 a.m., it felt like the crack of dawn with daylight savings time having gone into effect the weekend prior) was a group of Herb Society volunteers eagerly waiting to set up the shipment from Nature's Herb Farm. Once again, the San Antonio Herb Society was privileged in being asked to participate in the annual Spring Bloom event sponsored by SAWS (San Antonio Water System). We busily set up the canopy, hoisted our sign, and arranged the beautiful fresh herb plants on the tables. Before we could take a breath, we had our first customer, and from then until 1:00 p.m., it was nonstop.

The biggest excitement was when the winds started gusting and lifted the canopy up. It looked like we had the biggest kite in the area. We grabbed onto the poles to hold the canopy down, and then quickly dismantled everything. We felt lucky to have escaped being flown over the city of San Antonio on a makeshift parasail. With the teamwork and camaraderie of all the volunteers, there was no disruption to the event.

Everyone had a great time. Best of all, the Herb Society made a profit of \$746.

Dispensing gardening and culinary advice, lore, and laughter were Diana Bell, Camille Fiorillo, Carol-lee Fisher, Paul Fisher, Carol Hamling, Cyd Hughes, Rebecca Kary, Joe-Beth Kirkpatrick, Janet Miller, Cindy Moore, and John Osmer. Thanks to all of you for your hard work and good humor—and for giving up a Saturday morning!

Up 'n' Coming

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events:



Walk Across Texas: Fiesta Event

San Antonio Botanical Garden
Saturday, April 19:

7 a.m. – 9 a.m.

San Antonio Botanical Garden Members' pre-sale

9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Public Plant Sale—free admission

Locations:

Granite Plaza by Carriage House: San Antonio
Botanical Society plant sale
Conservatory: Plant Society/Groups plant sale locations

SAHS has been invited to participate in the plant sale at this event. It'll be a great opportunity to see and purchase your favorite plant selections early, learn more about herbs and other plants, and meet some of the talented members of the society. Let us know what time slots you can volunteer for! Contact Janet Miller at (210) 492-7684 or rhaemmerle@satx.rr.com.

Festival of Flowers

May 24 9–5 Alzafar Shrine
901 N. Loop 1604 West
(between Stone Oak Parkway and Blanco Road)



Admission: \$5 adults; children under 10 free; free parking. Visit the website for a "\$1 off" admission coupon: www.safestivalofflowers.com
The Festival of Flowers is an event to shop for beautiful and unusual plants, quality products and services, landscaping ideas, and expert advice on gardening and outdoor living environments.

Make Life More Delicious: An Herb Fest at Central Market

Central Market's Herb Fest cultivates the flavors, scents, and textures of the garden.

When: Friday, April 4, through Sunday, April 6, 2008

Where: Central Market – San Antonio
4821 Broadway St., San Antonio, TX 78209
(210) 368-8600
www.CentralMarket.com

The savory range of bay leaf. The piney pungency of rosemary. The lightness of lemon grass. The calming fragrance of lavender. Herbs have been prized for centuries for their multitude of uses, from cooking to healing to decorating. Central Market explores the garden's most versatile plantings April 4–6 with Herb Fest, the latest in the store's food-centric celebrations.

Dig into Potted Herbs

Central Market gives customers a head start on that straight-from-the-garden flavor with its Texas-grown potted herbs, direct from farmers in the Hill Country and Wylie, Texas. We'll even repot them in a show-worthy container for free during Herb Fest. Mix and match for variety, or keep it simple with a few favorites. Or, choose from a selection of pre-arranged combinations such as sage, thyme, and oregano or a variety of mints. Local gardening experts will be on-hand for Q&As about keep-

ing the new plants alive and well once at home.

Workshops and Samples

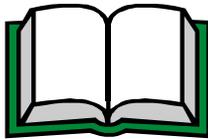
Central Market's Foodies will share their culinary expertise (not to mention the delicious samples), starting with tips for storing and using fresh herbs. How long do dried herbs retain their potency? Which herbs are best used just for their leaves, and then what do you do with the stems? Foodies can help create herb-infused oils and vinegars to brighten dressings or season marinades. They can even lend a few ideas about using the more unusual herbs, such as epazote, kaffir lime leaves, or lemon verbena. Customers may even learn a thing or two about herb lore. Did you know rosemary became a symbol of romantic fidelity because ancient Greeks believed it was a gift from Aphrodite, the goddess of love?

Herbs in Everything

Central Market is crushing, chopping, puréeing, stirring, and arranging fresh and dried herbs into innovative recipes, adding novel items at every turn. A crop of herbs specially grown for Central Market by farmers in Rice, Texas, takes center stage among the beefsteak tomatoes, 10/15 sweet onions, and red potatoes.

Healthy Herbs

Learn how to relieve stress or stay alert with herbs such as aloe, ginkgo, Echinacea, and ginseng from Central Market's Healthy Living department. Take a whiff of the aromatic oils, diffusers, and candles with herbal extracts, such as rosemary, citrus, lavender, or mint, for stress-relieving aromatherapy. Don't forget the therapeutic benefits of herbal teas.



Resource Guide Update

On March 17, the Resource Guide Committee met and decided to ask for more input from the membership. At the March SAHS general meeting, eight members volunteered to help with various aspects of updating and producing the indispensable guide. The committee will meet next on April 7 and will start presenting the new and updated content for subsequent review.

Share Table

You will be seeing a new table at the San Antonio Herb Society monthly meetings. It will be a free-for-the-taking table where members can share seeds, cuttings, extra baskets, pots, or magazines. The limiting factor will be your imagination.

I don't know about you, but sometimes when I trim my oregano or rosemary, I throw on the mulch pile hundreds of dollars of fresh herbs. This got me to thinking, *maybe I could share*. You don't have to wrap it up like the professionals do. Just bring it—whatever you have an abundance of.

If you have some clean pots that you know you won't use any more, you might want to share them with others. A kitchen gadget you bought in a moment of weakness, then decided you didn't want? Put it on the table. Please, no dirty pots, baskets, or trash.

Two rules:

1. No money changes hands.
2. At the end of the evening, if your item is still there, please take it back home or throw it away.

That's all!

The debut of our new members share table at the March meeting was a success with nothing left. For our first venture, we had seeds, measuring cups, hand lotion, several different magazines, and numerous other items. At first members could not believe the items were free, but once they were convinced no money was to change hands they got in the spirit. This is a great way to recycle items you no longer need. So be thinking about what you can bring to our next meeting to add to the table.

I think we can have some fun with this

—Carol Hamling



Tips for Storing and Using Fresh Herbs

1. If you don't plan to use your fresh herbs at once, blanch the leaves in boiling water for three to five seconds, and refrigerate or freeze. The herbs will retain their nice color.
2. Purée herbs in a blender or food processor with your favorite oil, and refrigerate or freeze.
3. Purée herbs with a small amount of water, and freeze in ice cube trays. Store ice cubes in a plastic bag, and use to season soups, sauces, and beverages.
4. Crush herbs and add them to 12 ounces of white wine vinegar with a whole peeled garlic clove. Let steep for a few days up to two weeks. Strain and use vinegar in salads, as a marinade, or add to cooking water when steaming vegetables.
5. When using fresh herbs instead of dried herbs, use three times the amount for which the recipe calls.
6. Always rinse herbs, pat dry with paper towel, and strip leaves from the stem before using. Use the stems in stocks and soups for additional flavoring.
7. Always add fresh herbs in the last few minutes of cooking to retain their best flavor (except for fresh bay leaves and thyme, which don't lose their flavor during long cooking).
8. Chopping, mincing, or crushing fresh herbs releases their full flavor.
9. Store fresh herbs in a container in the crisper section of the refrigerator. Never store fresh basil below 50 degrees. When you store basil in your refrigerator, put the original container inside one or two larger plastic containers to insulate it from the cold. Basil can be stored at room temperature if you place the stems in a glass of water and mist the leaves.

—Central Market

BRIAN'S APRIL TO-DO LIST

Please note, most of the information shared here was obtained from Research-based sources (see contributors acknowledgments below), and from individuals who are considered very knowledgeable on a particular subject. While some little tidbits here may be of interest, they should be taken "with-a-grain-of-salt". (compiled by MG Brian D. Townsend—briandt@juno.com)



*A house though otherwise beautiful, yet if it hath no Garden belonging to it,
Is more like a Prison than a House. - William Coles (1656)*

1st WEEK:

Mow live oak leaves and let them decompose on the lawn or use them for mulch.

Junior petunia is a hardy reseeding plant for color in cool and hot weather. It can be planted now.

Plant beans, sweet corn, summer squash, radishes, carrots and beets in the organically prepared vegetable garden.

If your pecan trees showed small leaves and few nuts last year, the trees probably need zinc. Spray it on the emerging leaves or apply a cheated zinc source to the soil.

Keep pulling weeds- don't let them go to seed. - AJW

Attracting Hummers & Butterflies: The following are attractive plants to hummingbirds and butterflies, experts say, and are well-suited to S. Texas landscapes because they are drought-resistant.

A) For Hummingbirds: Autumn sage, Carolina jessamine, ceniza, coral honeysuckle, lantana, red yucca, Turk's cap; also trumpet vine, flame acanthus, columbines, desert willows, coral bean, wild azaleas, brownfoot, ocotillo, and every kind of salvia, penstemon and pentas.

B) Butterflies: are attracted to masses of flat-faced flowers agarita, butterfly bush, Indian blanket, mealy cup sage, purple coneflower, summer phlox and Texas bluebonnet; also sunflowers, rosinweeds, wild ageratum, palmleaf eupatorium, monardas, verbenas, lantana, pavonia, old plainsman, spectacle pod and passionflower. But butterflies also visit tubular and spiky flowers such as salvias, bottlebush, hibiscus, Turk's cap, and Virginia sweetspire. (If you are trying to attract butterflies, please avoid using pesticides that harm caterpillars, such as "Bt", *Bacillus thuringiensis*, and others. This may sound silly, but some people don't connect the two creatures. - me)

In Our Herb Garden: It's not too late to set out transplants of perennial herbs. * From now and throughout the summer, plant basil, which likes the warm weather. * Cool weather annuals planted late this month will go to seed near the end of June (examples are dill, cilantro, parsley). * Weed and water as necessary. * Enjoy your garden, everything is taking off!

2nd WEEK: *** Poteet Strawberry Festival ***

(continued on next page)

Aerate lawns at least once each year; use a core-extracting aerator. Top dress it with compost or a compost/sand mix to revitalize the grass.

Tomatoes can be planted in the garden now. Mulch them with leaves, cocoa shells, lawn clippings or other material to avoid blossom end rot.

The oak blooms that are littering your yard, decomposes quickly in the compost pile. Mix them with the oak leaves. - CF
Many people think that moon gardening works because all water is affected by the movement of the moon and plants are mostly water. Both the sun and moon affect water through their magnetic pull but the moon is much closer to the earth hence its influence is stronger. - TGS

3rd Week: * * * FIESTA * * *

Plant basil, begonia, caladium and impatiens in prepared beds. Warm-weather annuals such as zinnias, lantana and purslane can be planted now. The semperfloren begonias (wax begonias, available at most nurseries) can be grown in sun or shade. Plant them now in sunny locations so they can put on growth before the heat arrives.

Use spinach and cole crops. All except Brussels sprouts are declining quickly from heat and aphids.

Turn your compost pile to speed decomposition.

Mulch newly planted tomatoes to conserve water and prevent blossom end rot.

It is time to plant okra, Southern peas and ornamental cotton.

4th Week:

Plant heat-tolerant perennials like China Doll, Firebush, Gingers, Lantana and Mex. Bird-of-Paradise.

Harvest columbine seeds before pods open. Put the stalks in a brown paper bag so they will collect in the sack when they open.

When onion tops fall over, it's time to harvest. Put the bulbs on the surface of the garden bed for a day to harden off, and then store them in mesh bags in a dry room.

Plant watermelon and cantaloupe.

Many thanks to my contributors for sharing their wisdom so I can learn and share it with you.

This is a very abbreviated version of Brian's To-Do List. Read Brian's complete, unedited list on the SAHS website at

www.sanantonioherbs.org/todo.htm

Beg. Bal.	4574.03
Deposits	
Memb. Dues	140.00
Expenses	
Garden Center	-85.00
Attendant	-25.00
FOF Booth fee	-50.00
Ending Balance	4554.03
2 year CD	1058.80
Savings	1023.31
Total Assets	6,636.14

**March
Treasurer's
Report**
by Carol-lee
Fisher



**'07-'08 SAHS Board
Officers**

Carol-lee Fisher-President

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DISCLAIMER

Information presented in this newsletter and at the SAHS meetings is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional. Herbal formulas are given for reference purposes only and a person may have a reaction to any herbal product even though it is not a toxic substance.

Business Members

We thank our business members for their support. When you patronize their businesses, be sure to mention your SAHS membership.

Bible Gardens of San Antonio

Aida & David Sanchez
 1602 Dawnridge
 San Antonio, TX 78213
 (210) 341-6987

Diane R. Lewis, B.S. & A.A.S.

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 tant
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www.communityed.neisd.net
www.longaberger.com/DianeLewis

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PLEASE SEND TO:

If your last name
 begins with the letters
R-Z
 please bring refreshments
 to the April meeting.

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 The San Antonio Herb Society