



La Yerba Buena

visit us online at www.sanantonioherbs.org

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

NUMBER 204, MARCH 2007

MISSION STATEMENT

The San Antonio Herb Society is organized to bring together those who are interested in growing, using, and promoting general knowledge of herbs to the membership, and the public at large. This includes volunteer participation in public service projects such as Habitat for Humanity and the Herb Garden at the San Antonio Botanical Garden.

Nick Vann to Focus on Planning or Improving Existing Herb Beds at March 15th Meeting

(Please note that this month's meeting will be held on the 3rd Thursday.)

This month we continue our exploration of the Wonderful World of Herbs. You asked for it -- and we are responding with a special program on designing your herb garden, or improving your existing one. Nick Vann, also known as Nematode Nick, is going to share some of his vast knowledge on landscape design, along with his dedication to organic gardening. Space limitations like creating an herb garden along a fence or under a tree, or in pots on a small patio, will be addressed. Nick will have slides to illustrate what works, how to avoid special problems, and when we should move certain herbs to a more productive location.

Nick is well known in the San Antonio area. He teaches landscape design for Master Gardener classes, and is active with the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association, as well as the Native Plant Society of Texas.

He is a charter member of the National Gardening Club. His programs are much in demand, and we are fortunate to have him with us on March 21st. Incidentally, he and his wife, Leslie, are members of San Antonio Herb Society.

With spring around the corner, and herb planting time upon us, this is your opportunity to learn how to improve your growing practices and make your garden more decorative and productive. And bring a neighbor with you. This is a great time to acquaint them with our Society, and at the same time gain valuable insight into growing herbs.

The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. (with refreshments served beginning at 6:30 p.m.) on Thursday, March 15, at the San Antonio Garden Center, corner of Funston and N. New Braunfels. For additional information, visit our web site at www.sanantonioherbs.org.

Lorraine Jennings, Program Chairperson



Refreshments

Members with last names beginning with L - P are asked to bring refreshments to this month's meeting. Please arrive by 6:30 p.m. so all can enjoy your dish. Don't forget to e-mail your recipe to syeiraq@yahoo.com for publication in the next newsletter.

April Newsletter Deadline

All members are invited to share news, ideas, recipes, remedies, stories, or photos in our monthly newsletter. E-mail your April newsletter submissions to Syeira Budd at syeiraq@yahoo.com by **Saturday, March 10.**

Welcome, New SAHS Member!

A big welcome from all of us to our newest member:

Alpha A. Martinez-Suarez

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AND MORE!!!

SAHS to Participate in 2007 King William Parade & Annual Herb Hat Contest



*Sally Ann Hnatiuk shows off her
2006 Herb Hat Contest entry!*

Put on your creative thinking caps and represent the SAHS with style for our annual Herbal Hat Contest AND King William Parade on Saturday, April 28. On Thursday, April 12th, bring your herb-decorated hat to our April meeting. Members will vote for their 3 most favorite hats. The winners will be the Duchess, Princess and Queen of Herbs, giving them special places of honor to ride on the float. These annual events are some of the wackiest & most delightful ways to share your enthusiasm for herbs (not to mention loads of fun)! Sign up at the March and April meetings to help decorate the float (the morning of the parade) and to participate. PLEASE NOTE: Do not enter the hat contest unless you plan to attend the parade. Also, all parade participants must sign a King William Parade Participant Waiver form. Contact Jean Dukes at 566-4379 for questions or more information.

March Herbal Crafts SIG Meeting



TOPIC: Ointment for sore muscles, or some St. Patrick's Day surprise.

WHEN: Saturday, March 17, at 10am

MORE INFO: Contact Rebecca Kary for details at 200-8512.

Upcoming Gardening Events

Annual Garden Center Plant Sale

WHAT: The Garden Center is filled with new and unique bedding plants, hanging baskets, daylilies, herbs, roses, cacti, succulents, native plants and perennials. There is also a "donation" area where our gardening members contribute rare and unusual plants from their own yards and gardens.

WHEN: Friday, March 9 - Saturday, March 10, 9am-4pm

WHERE: San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels at Funston

MORE INFO: Call 824-9981 or visit www.sanantoniogardencenters.org

The Art of Nature Family Program

WHAT: A FREE program of fun visual arts activities led by local arts educators from The Mobile Arts Program (MAP) of the Young Artist Programs (YAP) of the Southwest School of Art & Craft. Come for one session or all three (see below)!

WHEN: Saturday, March 17, 10am-4pm

+ 10am-12pm: Paper Freshwater Fish

+ 12-2pm: Drawing Bugs & Flowers

+ 2-4pm: Mobiles with Natural Materials

WHERE: Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, 10750 Pleasanton Rd

RSVP REQUIRED: Call 628-1639

7th Annual Gartenfest

WHAT: Enjoy gardening lectures and vendors. The theme this year is "Mediterranean Gardening in the Hill Country" with speakers from Becker's Lavender Farm, Sandy Oaks Olive Farms, designing your garden, and a light Mediterranean lunch prepared by Chef Cooper in the Forke Store. Cost for all lecture tickets is \$20.00 - admission to grounds and vendors is free.

WHEN: Saturday, March 24, 9am-1pm

WHERE: New Braunfels Conservation Plaza, 1300 Church Hill Dr., New Braunfels

MORE INFO: Call (830) 629-2943 or (830) 832-9699

Spring Plant Sale

WHAT: Purchase healthy, hardy plants suitable for the San Antonio environment and get expert advice from SABG volunteers, many of whom are Master Gardeners. Admission to the garden: \$6 adults, \$3 children 3-13, \$4 students, military and senior citizens. Admission to the event is included with admission to the garden.

WHEN: Saturday, March 31, 9am until sold out

WHERE: San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston

MORE INFO: Call 829-5100 or visit www.sabot.org

17th Annual Mostly Native Plant Sale

WHAT: Find native and mostly native plants that are perfect for use in any Hill Country landscape. There will also be demonstrations and informal talks from experts in Hill Country landscaping. Admission is \$2 for adults; kids under 12 are free.

WHEN: Saturday, April 7, 9am-4pm

WHERE: Kendall County Fair Grounds, Boerne

MORE INFO: Call (830) 249-4616 or visit www.cibolo.org

13th Annual Herb Fest

WHAT: Fine Food, Wine, Shopping, Gardening & Cooking Classes, Music, Art & Entertainment. Herb Festival Dinner on Friday & Saturday evening by reservation.

WHEN: Friday, April 20 - Sunday, April 22

WHERE: Fredericksburg Herb Farm, 407 Whitney, Fredericksburg

MORE INFO: Call (830) 997-8615 or visit www.fredericksburgherbfarm.com

12th Annual Herbal Forum

“A Celebration of Lemon-Scented Herbs and Lemon Balm, Herb of the Year”

SAHS members who would like to attend The 12th Annual Herbal Forum at The International Festival-Institute (Festival Hill) at Round Top, TX, March 23 – March 24, 2007, should sign up as soon as possible (deadline is March 16) to insure a room with our group and also a spot in the optional workshops where space is limited. There is information at the web site, click on www.festivalhill.org, then click on “Herbal Forum” from the menu. Call Jessica at 979-249-3129 to request a flyer or to make reservations. The flyer contains descriptions of the workshops, lectures, and events. Call SAHS member Diane Lewis at 210-494-6116 for information about carpooling, roommate leads, or other information.

The authors of “Southern Herb Growing”, Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay, have tended the herb gardens, directed the food service, and resided at Festival Hill for many years. Festival Hill is about a 2.5 hr drive from San Antonio, we will carpool. There will be an early group that attends optional Friday, March 23, workshops and/or visits the grounds/sales and likely a late group that arrives after work on Friday. Arriving early allows more time for shopping the wonderful plant sale where you will find standard and unusual herb cultivars and some other plants for sale 9 am to 6 pm on Friday, and 7:30 to 5 pm on Saturday. There is an optional Friday night dinner (\$20 in advance) which some of us will attend. It is very delicious, plus offers opportunity to meet the speakers. We will stay two nights and leave late Sunday morning, March 25, after informally touring the lovely gardens and taking advantage of additional photo opportunities. Those who need to leave earlier can arrange to ride back together. **Note:** There is so much happening on Saturday that it is difficult to fit in shopping

for plants and other items, without missing lectures or demonstrations, so we suggest coming on Friday before the sales close at 6 pm, best selection too.

The Herbal Forum registration is \$75 for Saturday, which includes all lectures, demonstrations, handouts, herbal samples, music and poetry, an exceptionally delicious and beautifully presented herbal lunch, and late afternoon refreshments. You also get all the herbal recipes for the above in your packet.

The Saturday program and plant sales end at 5 pm but the SAHS members will continue to socialize into the evening. If weather permits, we may chat on the wrap-around porch about the day's festivities and share experiences from the afternoon sessions. We will have informal show and tell about our plant and other exciting purchases. Then we will all gather in one selected room for an appetizer potluck (in place of dinner) and more social time.

The room rate is \$55 per night per person if you share a room with one or two people. This rate includes a lovely continental breakfast on Saturday and Sunday morning. Each room has three twin beds, lots of space, and a private restroom with a shower and two sinks.

Some of us have already signed up for the optional “Creating Herbal Cheeses” workshop on Friday at 3:30 pm (\$35) with “abundant samples”. There are two other workshops, see web site, they each have a limit of 20 participants per session and may fill up fast (each optional Friday workshop is offered at 1 pm and again at 3:30 pm). Contact Diane Lewis for more information and a flyer listing what to bring for the workshop.

Diane Lewis

Update on Non Profit Status

The current board has decided that the San Antonio Herb Society will return to what it has always been, a social club which brings together those who are interested in using and growing herbs and which promotes general knowledge of herbs to the members and the public at large.

Carol-lee Fisher, President

Children's Herbal Craft Corner

It's time to sweeten the tea with **Edible Flower Sugar Cubes!** Look in the produce department for a package of edible flowers.



Materials:

Sugar cubes
Tube of frosting with narrow tip
Edible flowers

Directions:

1. Set the sugar cubes on wax paper with space between each to allow the flower space to set.
2. Place a drop of frosting on the sugar cube.
3. Gently lay the flower on the frosting.
4. Leave out to allow the flower and frosting to set.

Set the sugar cubes on a pretty plate surrounded by a variety of tea packets to soothe away worries and cares.

Estelle Kelly

Habitat for Humanity Work Day on March 10

We have a work day scheduled for March 10, 2007. There will be 10 homes needing assistance with their plantings. This means we need at least 5-6 people, more will make the work go even faster. We also need plant donations. Suggestions are rosemary, rue, aloe, thyme and cilantro in 4" or 6" pots. We will car pool from the Quarry parking lot. You don't need any special skills or knowledge just a smile and willingness to work and have fun.

Contact Sally Ann Hnatiuk at (830) 980-5645 for more information.

February Meeting Recipes

Many thanks to the members who shared the following recipes for the dishes they brought to the February meeting!

Cinco de Mayo Spread

Carol Hamling

2 tablespoons milk
1 cup Cilantro Pesto, recipe follows
1 cup Tomato Salsa Cruda, recipe follows
1 cup Avocado Salsa, recipe follows

To prepare the Cinco de Mayo Spread, select a springform pan or straight-sided dish that is 5 to 6 inches in diameter and 2 inches deep. Line the bottom and sides with plastic wrap, smoothing out the plastic as much as possible.

Beat half the cream cheese with the milk, so it is easily spreadable. Spread this mixture evenly over the bottom of the pan. Chill for 30 minutes. Spread the Cilantro Pesto evenly over the cream cheese and chill. Beat the remaining cream cheese with the Tomato Salsa Cruda and carefully spread it over the Cilantro Pesto. Chill for at least 4 hours. Place a serving platter on top of the springform pan and, holding the dishes with both hands, flip them over. Remove the springform ring and bottom. Gently pull the plastic wrap off. Just before serving, spoon the Avocado Salsa over the top of the spread. Serve immediately with tortilla chips.

Tomato Salsa Cruda

4 Italian Roma tomatoes, cored and chopped
1 to 2 serrano chilies, chopped
1/4 small onion, chopped
Juice of 1 lime
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a blender, place the tomatoes, chilies, onion, lime juice, salt, and pepper. Blend briefly, making sure the salsa remains rough. Store in a covered container, in the refrigerator, no more than 1 day.

Cilantro Pesto

6 cloves garlic, peeled
1 bunch fresh parsley, stemmed

1 bunch cilantro, stemmed
2 tablespoons toasted almonds
4 tablespoons olive oil
Juice of 2 lemons
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper

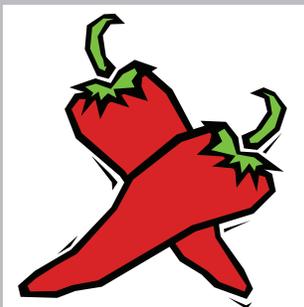
Hand chop the garlic, parsley, cilantro, and almonds until fine. Combine with the oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper until well mixed. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Avocado Salsa

1 avocado, diced
Juice of 1/2 lime
2 tablespoons minced onion
2 tablespoons minced cilantro
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
Pinch cayenne pepper

In a small bowl, mix the avocado, lime juice, onion, cilantro, salt, and pepper. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator no more than 1 hour.

Source: *Two Hot Tamales* on the Food TV Network



Monterey Jack Salsa

Diana Fox

1 (4-oz) can chopped green chiles (Hatch brand, "hot" preferred)
1 (3-4 oz) can chopped black olives
4 green onions, chopped
1/4 pound Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
1 large tomato, chopped
1/2 cup Italian salad dressing, regular or fat-free
1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Stir together all ingredients. Serve with tortilla chips. Makes about 2 cups.

Source: *Come On In: Recipes from the Junior League of Jackson, Mississippi*

Go Green!

Would you like to receive the SAHS newsletter, La Yerba Buena, on line at our website each month? Here are some benefits for becoming a Green Member:

- You will get to read the newsletter on line via email notification even before it is sent to the printer
- You can copy and save recipes and articles electronically on your own computer, either all or in part, and print them out if you wish
- All photos are in color in the on line version of La Yerba Buena
- You will receive other updates via email, such as speaker notes, handouts, and occasional herbal tips that are not generally available to other members
- On line publications are environmentally friendly
- Most of all, all of the saved postage and printing costs go back into the SAHS budget for funding even more outstanding programs!

If you are not yet a Green Member but would like to be, please send your name and email address to Lyn Belisle at belisle@satx.rr.com.

Sign up to be a Green Member today and save a tree (or herb), save postage, and save SAHS resources!

Online Resources

E-mail your favorite online resources to syeiraq@yahoo.com for publication in a future newsletter.

Thanks to Sally Ann Hnatiuk for sharing the following sources!

www.plantanswers.com

A great resource site for gardening. Calvin Finch, Jerry Parsons, and Texas A&M all participate in it.

www.epicurious.com

A great recipe site.

Brian Townsend's March To-Do

Read Brian's unedited January to-do list on our web site at www.sanantonioherbs.org/todo.htm.

*"I have found, through the years of practice, that people garden
in order to make something grow; to interact with nature;
to share, to find sanctuary, to heal, to honor the earth, to leave a mark.*

Through gardening, we feel whole as we make our own personal work of art upon our land."

– Julie Moir Messervy, *The Inward Garden*



1ST WEEK:

- The first few days of this month is the last call for planting bare-root dormant rose bushes. They can be planted later with success, but they will not grow off as quickly or as well.
- Last chance to apply pre-emergent herbicides and receive their full benefit. Remember to water them in lightly.
- Still time to mow/cut well established Asian Jasmine, liriopse and mondograss, feed with a slow-release

lawn food (never use a weed & feed).

- Harvest spinach, leaf lettuce, collars and other greens one leaf at a time as you need them for salads.
- To revitalize your lawn, aerate and top-dress your lawn now with a 1/2 inch of compost.

2ND WEEK:

- The live oak leaves may be falling, this is normal, no cause for alarm. The round growths on the leaves are wasp galls, harmless to the tree. Use them for mulch.
- Geraniums, dianthus and petunias (salvia plants can be set out too) are good color plants for the sun during this transition from cool weather to hot.
- Prune crape myrtles in mid to late March for shaping. Do not cut their tops off.
- The current crop of WEEDS in your lawn will die with warm weather. Keep them mowed to prevent reseeding. (*Mowing your lawn now will *reduce weeds* from reseeding and encourage turf grass to grow and green up sooner.)

3RD WEEK:

- We have passed the average fast frost date for San Antonio. (It can still freeze! The time of the latest freeze is still two weeks away.) If extended weather-forecasts are favorable, it should be ok to turn the gas off to your furnace!
- Spring is an exciting time for backyard bird watching as some of our familiar friends migrate home and join those who stayed all winter. Watch for beautiful *warblers* as they secretly journey through our yards during the first few weeks of May. Grab your binoculars, and you may catch a glimpse of one flitting about tree branches or checking out your birdbath mister... Keep an eye out for nest-building and nestling-feeding behaviors as *bluebirds, wrens, chickadees and woodpeckers* take to the nest and raise their young.
- Oust APHIDS! Consider adding nasturtiums (aphid's favorite snack!) to your flower bed. When the nasturtiums get attacked, just yank them out and destroy them, leaving your other plants in fine shape.
- Plant warm-season annuals and vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, petunias and Dahlberg daisies, but protect the plants if frost (or hail storm) is predicted.
- If weather is looking good, this is a good time for planting cantaloupes, watermelons and cucumbers.

4TH WEEK:

- Cold-sensitive plants can be placed on the patio now (check weather forecast). Be prepared to protect them if a late freeze threatens.
- The first set of potted tomatoes can be placed in the garden now. Place *Gro-Web* on the cages for protection from wind and cool nights.
- Wait to fertilize your lawn until you have mowed real grass twice. Fertilizing too early only benefits the weeds.
- Peak wildflower time in the San Antonio area probably will be during the first week of April.
- Ground temperature is warming up, and hot-season crops can be sown. Consider planting Southern peas, pumpkins, peanuts, squash and okra.

SPRINGTIME STROLL:

Spring moves north at a rate of about 16 miles a day. That means a person walking at a good pace could keep up with it, watching dogwoods, tulips and daffodils (and roses) come into bloom along the way.

(Courtesy of *Birds A Blooms*, Feb./Mar. 2001)

(March To-Do continued on page 6)

(March To-Do continued from page 5)

IN OUR HERB GARDEN:

- March 15 is the average last frost date for our Zone 8 (b).
- Thin annual seedlings planted in February.
- Plant transplants of annual or perennial herbs and label cultivars for identification. Examples to plant are parsley, French thyme (which does better in S.A.'s hot months than English thyme), oreganos, and Mexican mint marigold.
- Plant basil seed, which needs warm soil (day/night temps, above 60 degs.).
- Plant ginger roots shallow in area where they will receive afternoon shade. For edible ginger, purchase firm roots from the produce section of your local grocery store.

Thanks to Brian Townsend for this monthly article. Brian has culled this information from the wisdom of a number of local and regional gardening experts, plus our own HERBS: A Resource Guide for San Antonio.

Windowsill Seed Starting: Beware of the Damping-Off Disease

Q: What happened to my seedlings I started indoors - they took seven days to sprout up and two days to keel over and die? Is there some mystery to growing plants from seeds?



A: If you start seeds indoors, several precautionary steps must be followed in order to ward off the pesky fungal disease in the soil, along with the ambient temperature of the air and water, providing air circulation is a must, and the light intensity should be the brightest. Here's how to prevent it:

1. Use a sterile seed starter mix, spotlessly clean all equipment, the working surface, and your hands.
2. Make sure it is between 75 and 90 degrees, the warmest room indoors.
3. Have several containers of water nearby at all times to water the seedlings, there's nothing like cold water from the tap to shock young plants. Do not over water or use fertilizer yet.
4. Once seeds emerge, air circulation is important, use a small fan.
5. The light intensity coming into the window should not be blocked by outside shrubs. Use a south-east or south-west windowsill location. Indoor reflectors (such as mylar film) help bounce incoming light back onto the seedlings.

As far as the mystery to growing plants from seeds, follow each seed's package recommendation and handling, some seeds may require stratification, inoculation, scarification or a combined method.

Sheila Mangra

January 2007 Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Jean Dukas

CHECKING ACCOUNT BEGINNING BALANCE	\$4,334.79	Comments
INCOME		
Membership Dues	\$250.00	deposited 1/10/07
	\$715.00	deposited 1/16/07
	\$140.00	deposited 1/27/07
Nametags	\$8.50	
EXPENSES		
Newsletter		Total: \$193.84
Printing	(\$98.39)	
Postage	(\$78.00)	
Paper	(\$17.45)	
Garden Center Fee	(\$85.00)	
Garden Center Attendant	(\$25.00)	
Hospitality	(\$137.26)	Supplies for several months
Web Site	(\$49.00)	Quarterly Fee
Copy Expenses	(\$15.14)	Membership
Special Event Fees	(\$99.32)	Holiday Banquet
Other	(\$38.94)	4 boxes of checks, CITM
	(\$7.38)	Supplies for Treasurer
	(\$5.00)	TX Sec. of State
	(\$135.59)	Comptroller: Annual State Tax
CHECKING ACCOUNT ENDING BALANCE	\$4,656.82	
2-year CD	\$1,000.00	matures 12/24/07
Savings Account	\$1,011.56	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$6,668.38	

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE MORE ENERGY & IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH?

Call Jean Dukes @ (210) 213-4454 for a free health consultation. Jean worked as an RN for 20 years and now does Natural Health counseling through her Ten Days Health Ministry.

Karen Cabral, M.A., LPC, LMFT, CTS

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The information in this newsletter is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace the advice of a health professional.

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We thank our Business Members for their support.

When you patronize their businesses, be sure to mention that you are a member of the SAHS.

Ten Days Health Ministry (Natural Health Counseling)

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10days@earthlink.net

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