



NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY
 FEBRUARY 2023

Art in The Park with David Jimenez

David Jimenez is the Education Coordinator for the Phil Hardberger Park - Natural Area, within the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department. David is an Alamo Area Master Naturalist. He graduated from MacArthur High School and got his degree in art from University of Texas in Austin. He taught at San Antonio ISD then came over to Parks and Recreation with the city., serving first at the various community centers in the city. He is a Certified Art Educator and Interpretive Guide, now at Phil Hardberger Park.



David encourages you to come out to the park for free programs with the family each month and to connect with nature.

If you have not made it to the Land Bridge, then David will tell you all about this innovative creation. Come to our February 9 meeting and then plan to take a walk in the park with David Jimenez.

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**SAN ANTONIO
 HERB SOCIETY**
 Mark your calendar for
 Thursday
 February 9
 3310 N. New Braunfels
 San Antonio, 79209

Social at 6:30 M- Z bring refreshments
 Meeting at 7

Meetings are free and open to the public.

sanantonioherbs.org

Upcoming Events

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Our next **General Meeting** will be the second **Thursday on February 9, 2023** at 6:30
 Members whose last names begin with **M to Z** are tasked with bringing refreshments.

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EARTHWISE LIVING DAY

Leon Valley Community Center

6427 Evers Road 78238

Saturday March 4 in Leon Valley. 9:30 –1:30
 Set up Friday March 3 between 3 and 7 p.m.
 Take-down begins at 1:45 p.m. Saturday
 Best practice is to carpool to this event.



Event takes place at the community Center on 6427 Evers Road. We will have a sign up sheet for volunteers and carpool for this event at the General Meeting

EARTHWISE LIVING DAY is probably the easiest event we do all year. The address is 6427 Evers Road 78238 It is indoors and easy to access, we set up the day before. Volunteers come to the event, just walk in and have fun talking with the public and selling.

Their goal is to demonstrate Earthwise Living by RETHINKING how to REDUCE, REUSE and RECYCLE daily. They request that we “Think Green: print on recycled paper with ink. Give aways should reflect their overall environmental theme.

be



Avoid plastic items unless they recycled. Use healthy ingredients, decomposable utensils and beaded Styrofoam.”

Herbs recycle themselves so well. Ollas are a great way to conserve water. And we often purpose objects. Earthwise Liv-Day helps us refocus our efforts.



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SPRING BLOOM!

We are so thrilled that SAWS is having Spring Bloom this year and it is live, at SAWS headquarters Mulberry and 37, across from the south east corner of Trinity University. The big SAWS building has ample parking in their multi-story garage, enter from St. Mary's Street. There will be people directing you. Elevator down to the main entrance, walk through the building to the terrace site.

Help Needed: Our herbs, from Nature's Herb Farm, will be delivered on **Friday the 10th at 1 p.m.** I would like some help then. We will have ample tables, and we will need to put the plants into alphabetical order for sales. The Herb Farm will supply a list of the plants so we can prepare signs to mark them.

We have asked for lots of Basil, as it sells the best. We usually have a broad supply of plants, including lavender.

Day Of : We will need a cashier, who can sit at the table and help make change. We always need lots of people to sell the herbs. Also will need people to 'talk shop ' with customers. They will not be behind the table selling, they will direct customers away from the table to discuss, then direct them to sales when they know what they need.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the February meeting- **Mark you calendar now March 11**

New opportunity! SAWS asked if we would also have a table, or a tent (small I think) to answer herbal questions. I said yes. So, we will have our brochure, especially the new Ginger one, out. And some books for reference- We will need some knowledgeable people to help man this and tell what we know about growing herbs. I think the Weed and Gloat team have had the most experience, but some newcomers also have a wealth of information.

Buy! Enjoy! Learn! Tell your friends and neighbors If not into selling, come and take advantage of all the information available. Master Gardeners, lawn information for husbands, plant give aways, trees maybe, tent with lectures. Water conservation information, water conservation information, water conservation information....



Herb Society Board

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Robin Maymar

robinmaymar@gmail.com

1st Vice-President (Programs) **Currently supplied by membership at large.**

Treasurer Milan Maymar

Secretary Volunteer at meeting

Membership Cindy Moore at meetings

Publicity Vacant

Our website: <https://sanantonioherbs.org>



We have a guest speaker this month who works with the Parks and Recreation people at Hardberger Park. David Jimenez has done Art using materials from nature and will bring his expertise to speak with us this month. He will inspire us to get outside and reconsider our yard as an extension of our living area and of our lives. month, to connect them with nature. For more information and registration, visit <https://www.philhardbergerpark.org/calendar> to learn more

I am so pleased with our Herb Society. Many members paid dues, others took the form home. If you have not done so this year, please consider sending in your dues. We have a volunteer who will be helping with membership. That may free others up to, at last, publish our directory.

Earthwise Living Day is coming up the first weekend in March. We need a few volunteers, and a lot of friends to come and enjoy this day. Let's all go and have fun.

Spring Bloom is the very next Saturday. This is our weekend to shine. The Herb Sale by us is our largest fund raiser of the year. We need lots of volunteers. Wear a hat Expect it to be both sunny and windy. Sitting down job, standing up jobs, walking around jobs. Also, be sure to tell everyone you know, especially those who want to put herbs into their gardens. This is the very best time to begin that spring garden. Invite them to come and shop from us.

At our Ginger meeting Zoom worked well. We had seven people join us from home at that meeting. This has made a difference, to be able to expand our reach. Many former members and inactive members have had various reasons they no longer attend. Being able to join us from home opens so many opportunities.

We do need a door keeper, however. They tell me that for people who have a fear of flying, that the first step to over-come the fear is a small amount of exposure. Maybe just looking at a picture of an airplane. Later, going to the airport and just walking around. For those with great fear of computers, we have an entry job for you. When a member clicks the Zoom address, a doorbell rings on our computer. The Door keeper, clicks on their name to admit them.... That's it. The whole task. You will have taken your very first step! Congratulations round of applause.

Are you this person? Do you want to conquer your fear of computer? Here is the ideal first step. Contact me before the meeting February 9

MEMO: to Z are tasked with bringing refreshments to February meeting.
Theme: Valentines Day



Culinary Contributions

Ginger is a hot, sweet, clean-flavored spice that gives zest to foods. It comes in root form, fresh, preserved in syrup or crystallized as a sweet candy. Ginger is also dried and sold in pieces or ground to a powder. The powder is used in baked foods.

Gingersnaps

oven 375 degrees

3/4 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup light molasses
1 beaten egg
2 cups sifted enriched flour
2 teaspoons soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon cloves
1 teaspoon ginger

Cream shortening and sugar; add molasses and egg; beat well. Sift dry ingredients; add to creamed mixture; mix well. Roll in small balls; dip into sugar; place 2 inches apart on greased cookie sheet. Bake in moderate oven (375) 15 minutes. Makes 4 dozen cookies.



Cindy's review of these cookies was that they were very tough. Then Dylan ate them at the last meeting and said they were just right. We suspect that they are best dipped in milk to be eaten. (We did not take this picture, it is a stock photo)

WEED AND GLOAT

Come weed with us at the

Botanical Gardens!

**Feel welcome to come to join us
this month in the sunshine.**

Next Weed and Gloat is scheduled
for Monday, February 27

We meet at 10 A.M.

Contact robinmaymar@gmail.com for
simple safety measures and directions for
parking. See you then.

The San Antonio Herb Society does not advise, recommend or prescribe herbs for medicinal use; Information is provided as an educational service and the San Antonio Herb Society cannot be held liable for its content. Please consult a health care provider before pursuing any herbal treatments.



OMG! WEED & GLOAT!

It is odd how one small change can impact the whole universe.

At our house we have been thinking of taking a Sabbath rest day. No grocery shopping, now working, just resting. So how's it going? If I don't get up early in the morning and look carefully at my calendar... disaster reigns!

So the Weed and Gloat day, which I try very hard to notify members of the Friday before, snuck up on me and here we were Monday and nobody notified. Also, a cold drizzly day perfect for staying in bed for hours, writing at a leisurely pace, planning an elegant lunch, maybe doing a crossword puzzle. Suddenly, like being shot out of a cannon, all sorts of deadlines loom.

So I hurriedly notified everyone. And, bless them, they came to weed! Actually Patsy got there at a little after 9. We usually meet later when it is cold, so it might be just a tad warmer. She stayed in the car with Esther until I arrived. Marsha came a few minutes after we did. But going later was NOT GOOD. It was a day where the temperature high was at about 10 am and then it just went right on getting colder and colder and colder.

We dug fast. We pulled and rooted up weeds. Ester did laps to stay warm. We added extra gloves to stay warm. We took breaks and put our hands in our pockets to stay warm. Patsy did laps to stay warm. We dug faster. No dice. I was just plain COLD!

Apparently it is oxalis season. We went from very little weeds to just about all surfaces covered with soft green oxalis. So, there was ample weeding for all of us. There were also large plants that had died. We lopped off dead basil bushes, pieces of artemisia that looked *groady*, and what was left of the Mexican Mint Marigolds.



For our efforts we were rewarded to find sprouts and leaves of most of these, deep in the mulch beginning already to grow again (pictured). Then, shining and looking like the Belle of the Ball was our winter friend Angelica (also pictured). It never shows up until the weather gets cold, then it spreads its beautiful green foliage to fill a huge space. In the summer when it is hot we have to remember where it is planted, so we don't plant something on top of it. Angelica used to be sugar cured and used to decorate cakes.



We got most of the weeds dug and pulled. We dragged the compost barrel and the tools to the behind-the-gate space. Nobody was at all warm, so we headed to W.D. Deli which was both warm and friendly. They had chicken tortilla or potato soup on offer, a variety of teas and good sandwiches. We had a grand time talking. Then everyone shared knowledge about cell phones. I think we need an Herb Society Support Group just to figure out all the wonderful things we can do with our cell phones. Well fed and well informed we headed home. Many thanks to our intrepid team for hard work on a very cold day.



RECYCLE FOREVER

What do you do with a large bag of corks? Patti Christensen-Kruse wanted to know. With a little Pinterest research we came up with a few suggestions. The real question is: how many plant holders can we make before Earthwise Living Day? Stay tuned....



Patti reports from Mexico: Visiting Jardín Botánico on the UNAM campus was on my bucket list. The second day in Mexico City in one of the more secluded gardens, I noticed a woman pulling weeds. To my delight, she's a professor. We talked for a bit about gardening, protecting and promoting native plants and sustainability.

Then I asked how I could learn more about the mission and research. She told me for a fee I could have a tour. I also asked if I could volunteer. She looked a bit surprised and said sure. Very casual. All in Spanish (Patti's goal was to learn Spanish by immersion). Two mornings later, grad student Rodrigo met me in front of the Instituto de Biología building next to Jardín Botánico. We walked upstairs to the cashier so I could pay 500 pesos cash (\$25 US) for the guided tour.

Rodrigo took me on a *private* tour (advantage of not travelling in high season!) His passion was contagious for protecting native plants and habitats and for integrating native plants into urban landscapes. These are interests we share.

He is also interested in ethnobotany and I asked him about his Master's thesis, which he'll soon finish. The time flew for more than three hours! My plan is to keep in touch through the biology department.

Tuesday I returned to the University to find Yvon, the professor, in her office. She walked with me to the greenhouses and seed preparation area. There students Belem and Juan Pablo explained and demonstrated how to clean seeds, and properly label them. Some information was familiar but not all the plant species. All in Spanish.

We laughed and chatted, while removing seeds from bean pods "they jump and hide under the table!"- and other kinds of seeds. Both students were happy to talk about their families. They both had lots of questions about life in the US, the baffling election system and federal policies.

We shared social contact information. Mexicans are big huggers.

UNAM is a tuition-free competitive (8% of applicants are accepted), very liberal university with protections for free speech and awareness about universal human rights. UNAM is a comfortable environment for me.

In lieu of tuition, the students must do community service for- I've forgotten how many -thousands of hours. All over Mexico City I enjoyed in-depth conversations with many broad-minded curious UNAM students and graduates.

Improving my Spanish before the trip was helpful. Spanish (not yet fluency) opened my mind and heart to countless precious conversations.

Thank you for the Zoom meeting ! That's a great way to attend the meeting from another country.

Meeting Minutes

MEETING MINUTES JANUARY GINGER

The meeting was called to order by Robin Maymar, president, at 7 pm
She welcomed both in person members, guests and those joining on Zoom.
See Upcoming Events p 2 for March events.
The meeting proceeded as a “Round Robin” with various members presenting their research.

For The Herb of the Year: Ginger we tried to find someone in the area who was an authority on growing ginger but had no success. So, we decided to be resourceful and do the research ourselves. Our goal was to publish a new brochure for this year featuring Ginger. Joe-Beth Kirkpatrick had authored the Dill brochure and we thought it was the best model. We divided the work among many. For our meeting, then, we presented our research. The cookie recipe from Cindy Moore has made it to the Yerba. There were many cookie contenders. Did not have time for a bake-off.
What follows are our findings.

GINGER
Zingiber officinale

Medicinal Properties

Gingerol, which is a component of ginger, makes it effective for controlling digestion and for treating nausea. Eating ginger also helps control gas. Modern research is ongoing in the age-old touted anti-inflammatory properties of ginger, but it has been used in folk medicine for that purpose for centuries. Furthermore, ginger has antioxidant properties as well. While ingesting ginger is regarded as medically sound, it is wise to consult your physician before undergoing any folk or herbal remedies. One possible side effect of ingesting too much ginger is an increased risk of bleeding; people on blood-thinning products would definitely want to seek medical advice as to dosage. Emma Slattery, a dietician at John Hopkins, reports that ginger tea may be the best way to get your ginger and is readily available in tea bag form or can be brewed from fresh ginger. (All this information was from the hopkinsmedicine.org site. There is a recipe for brewing fresh ginger tea there as well) Prized for its medicinal purposes for over 5,000 years, Ginger was used both as spice and medicine. In the Middle Ages, the value of ginger was the equivalent of one sheep. Queen Elizabeth I created the idea of Gingerbread men, who were said to resemble the likenesses of her various suitors.



Planting Ginger

Ginger does best in warm, humid climates so South Texas should be a good fit. Before beginning the planting, select the ginger rhizomes and cut them into 1-1 ½ inch pieces; Set them aside for several days until the cut surface begins to heal and form a callus. Ginger should be planted in early spring; each piece used should be plump with well-developed eyes. Pick a site that gets full sun with at least 2-5 hours of direct sunlight. Begin by preparing the soil; it needs to be loose, loamy soil with rich, organic matter incorporated. To keep the rhizomes from becoming waterlogged, good drainage is imperative. After planting mulch needs to be applied thickly to retain water, control weeds, and provide nutrients. The rhizomes should be planted 6-8 inches apart, 2-4 inches deep with growth buds pointed upward. A slow-release fertilizer may be applied when planting. Liquid fertilizer may be applied every few weeks. Compost is another option for providing nutrients and retaining water. Watering should be consistent but not heavy; soil needs to be moist not wet. As temperatures cool, watering may be reduced.



J Howard Garrett in *Texas Organic Vegetable Gardening* suggest “In the fall, buy the rhizomes(hands) and cut them into pieces about the size of half a golf ball. Cover the cut surfaces with fireplace ashes (*available at next meeting*) or soft rock phosphate (available from garden centers) on newspaper or butcher paper in a cool, dry place until the cut surfaces form a callous. I’ve learned the hard way that if you plant without taking this step, the pieces will rot in the soil.

Placed the callused ginger pieces in the soil at a planting depth so shallow that the pieces still show above the soil line. I use 6–8-inch clay pots. Put the pots in a sunny spot. They can be left outdoors while the weather is still warm, but must go inside during cool nights. Bottom warmth for commercially available heating devices helps to speed up the sprouting. Remember this is a tropical plant and must be kept warm in a brightly lit spot all winter.

In the spring when all danger of frost has past, the young ginger plants can be moved to larger pots and placed outdoors or planted in the garden.

Harvest Time: The following fall before the temperature falls below 50 degrees.

Height: 3 – 8 feet. Spread: 5 – 8 feet Final spacing 12 – 36 inches.”

Harvesting ginger can be done by digging up the whole plant. Rhizomes should be selected for replanting and replanted as soon as possible.

SOURCES for purchase.

A source to buy would be www.thegrowers-exchange.com they have ginger plant for \$13.99 and there is a good description of how to grow ginger if you click on the picture of ginger.

There are other sources. We will supplement in the actual brochure.



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