

President's Message

Dear Colleagues in Horticultural Therapy,

Welcome to the February 2024 newsletter of the American Horticultural Therapy Association! February is here and for most of us, glimpses of the early spring are being welcomed, as predicted by Punxsutawney Phil on February 2, 2024. Violets, primroses, and irises are reaching out, new growth is being noticed, and the days are slowly becoming longer. It is a month to prepare and become ready for a new season of growth, connection to Mother Earth, and prosperity of our horticultural therapy programs!

I invite you to GROW with AHTA. [Become a member](#) or encourage others to join, [join a work team](#), or [become a board of directors' member](#). Other ways you can help:

- Write an article for the [AHTA magazine](#)
- Connect to the AHTA social media
- Ask your facility/place of employment to become a sponsor
- Plan a webinar for our community
- Support our planning of our [2024 Annual Conference](#)
- Submit a research article for our [Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture](#)

Let us see Growth in AHTA! WE can do this collectively!

Lana Dreyfuss LPCC, LCADC, SEP, HTR, President of AHTA

News and Events

AHTA 2024

Collective Effervescence

Honoring Collaboration  
in Times of Change



OCTOBER 18-19, 2024 | RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

Save the Date for the AHTA 2024 Annual Conference

Collective Effervescence  
October 18-19, 2024 | Raleigh, North Carolina

AHTA is pleased to bring you the [2024 Annual Conference](#) as an in-person, two day event. Please save the dates as we look forward to meeting together in the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina on **October 18–19, 2024**. The theme of the conference this year is **Collective Effervescence**.

Hotel rooms can now be booked at the [Embassy Suites by Hilton Raleigh-Durham Research Triangle](#) via the [reservation link](#) or by calling 1-800-EMBASSY and using the code 92G. The deadline to secure a room is **September 27, 2024**.

Thank you for your interest in our [2024 Annual Conference](#) and stay tuned for additional updates.

Learn More

February Webinar

[An Introduction to Motivational Interviewing \(MI\)](#)  
February 20, 2024 | 7:00 PM ET

Do you want to better engage your clients in the garden? Do you feel something is missing with your conversations with them? There's an approach that may serve you and your clients better.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative and client-centered counseling technique aimed at eliciting behavior change by exploring and resolving ambivalence. In the context of horticultural therapy programs, MI can be a powerful tool for engaging participants in a manner that respects their autonomy and facilitates a genuine commitment to therapeutic goals. This one hour overview will explore MI and its uses, as well as leave participants with some tools to get started.

Register Today

Soothing Scents for Self-Care

Excerpted from the AHTA Magazine, Vol 49, Issue 1, 2021  
By Karen L. Kennedy, HTR

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the garden is fragrance. The sense of smell is closely tied to our limbic system and can have a powerful impact on feelings of well-being. The fragrance of herbs such as lavender has a well-known association with relaxation and stress relief. To have a bit of lavender to carry beyond the garden, try lavender infused oil. See below for directions on how to make a roll-on herbal oil blend. This portable project is a wonderful treat to add to a self-care strategy and quite literally, add to one's tool bag (purse, backpack, or pocket)!

Author Janice Cox, in her workbook, *Beautiful Lavender, A Guide and Workbook for Growing, Using, and Enjoying Lavender* shares the following recipe for making roll-on lavender infused oils. This project may be appropriate for some client groups to make and as a quick project for staff wellness events.

To make one Roll-on Lavender Bottle:

- 1 to 2 teaspoons almond, jojoba, argan, avocado, olive or grapeseed oil
- 1/4 teaspoon dried lavender buds
- 1 to 2 drops lavender essential oil
- 1-ounce glass roller bottle
- Add dried herbs to bottle. Top with oils and secure the top.
- To use, roll a small amount behind your ears, on your wrists, temples or even on the edge of your face mask. Inhale and let the lavender aroma soothe your spirit.

Experiment with other herb combinations such as:

- Relaxing blend – lavender, chamomile, and cinnamon bark pieces
- Energizing blend – lavender, dried citrus peel, and mint
- Refreshing blend – lavender, eucalyptus and cedar



Infused oils in a roll-on bottle.  
Photo Credit: Janice Cox

Note: Use only dried plants when making scented oils. Adding a couple drops of vitamin E oil will act as a natural preservative, making the oil blends last longer.

AHTA Annual Awards

AHTA is now accepting nominations for our [2024 Annual Awards](#). Please take time to consider those who are doing outstanding work in our field and [submit a nomination](#) for one of the following AHTA Annual Awards:

- Rhea McCandless Professional Service Award
- Alice Burlingame Humanitarian Service Award
- John Walker Community Service Award
- Ann Lane Mavromatis Scholarship
- AHTA Therapeutic Garden Design Award

Nominations will be accepted until **April 1, 2024!**

Submit Nominations



Nominations for AHTA Board of Directors Now Open

AHTA is a member driven organization, and we need those with a passion in our field to help AHTA grow into the next 50 years! We value your expertise in marketing, social media, sponsorship and partnership development, magazine editing, webinar development, membership growth, conference planning, and exam development. Help shape the future of AHTA and the future of the profession by volunteering! The [nomination form](#) to serve on the AHTA Board of Directors is open now through **April 1, 2024**. Learn more about the [nomination process](#) by watching the [video](#) above.

Learn More & Nominate

Come Join Us

AHTA would like to invite you to join one of our [work teams](#) to help in giving back to AHTA and receiving the benefits of being involved in helping AHTA move forward and connecting for the purpose of promoting horticultural therapy!

The AHTA Magazine Work Team, Conference Work Team, Credentialing Work Team, Marketing Work Team, Membership Work Team, Professional Education Work Team, Sponsorship Work Team, and Webinar Work Team invite you to share your expertise and support the growth of AHTA!

[Learn more](#) and send your interest to [info@ahta.org](mailto:info@ahta.org)!

Thank you and here's to a great 2024, another year of continued growth for all!

Learn More

Plan Now for National Horticultural Therapy Week 2024

Let's celebrate! **National Horticultural Therapy Week** is **March 17–23, 2024**. Each year, the American Horticultural Therapy Association coordinates the efforts of regional networking groups, affiliated horticultural therapy programs, and AHTA members to collaborate in celebrating the profession on a national and local level. Take time to connect to the outstanding [regional groups](#) for upcoming NHTW events and to be part of the planning process!



Learn More

Supporting AHTA

Your generous support makes it possible for our organization to grow and thrive. Your contributions help keep us going, including helping with the expenses of our annual conference, increasing our ability to work toward credentialing, offsetting the cost of our journal and other outreach publications, and connecting to colleges and universities, facilities, prisons, hospitals, and agencies that [support the profession of horticultural therapy](#).

Ways to Support AHTA

Become a Member

**Not a member of AHTA?** [Join today!](#) AHTA's membership is comprised of individuals who are passionate about the unique benefits of horticultural therapy as a therapeutic modality. Members are committed to the growth of the profession. Membership in the AHTA will keep you up to date on the latest in horticultural therapy news, as well as give you access to outstanding educational and networking opportunities.

Join Today