



LA GRANADA



April 2026

Granaderos y Damas
de Gálvez



San Antonio
Founding Chapter



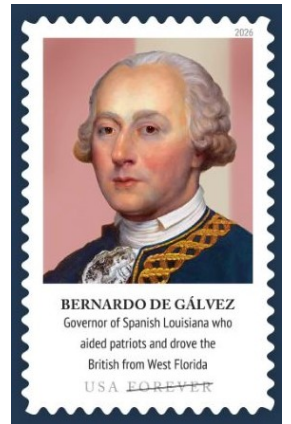
editor: joe pérez



Gálvez Stamp Coming Soon!!

A Bernardo de Gálvez U.S. postage stamp will be issued April 10, 2026, as one of 25 different "Figures of the American Revolution" stamp sheet. None of the stamps can be sold individually, they must be sold as a full sheet of 25.

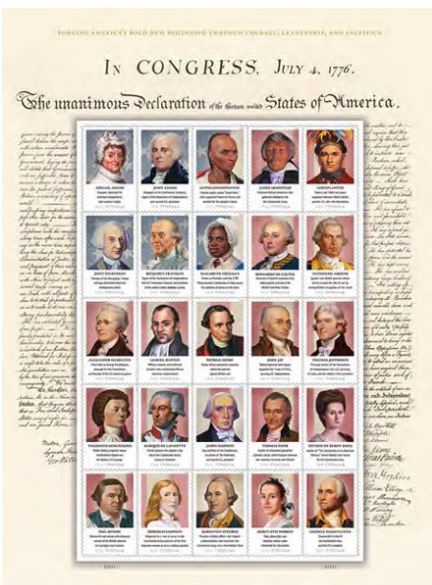
We started our Gálvez stamp campaign three years ago as our own America 250 event celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The U.S. Postal Service requires stamp requests to be submitted three years in advance and our Gálvez Stamp Committee wrote a compelling letter and encouraged hundreds of others across the country to also submit letters.



The Postal Service states "*The set of stamps honors 25 individuals whose actions helped shape the outcome of the American Revolution.*"

The margins of the set show the Declaration of Independence. The set has 25 stamps at 78-cents per stamp, so the whole set sells for \$19.50

We did not get the Postal Service to issue a full sheet of individual Gálvez stamps but we're hoping we get that on the anniversary of one of his battles. Huzzah!!!



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Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 1

La Fonda Restaurant

8633 Crownhill Blvd

Dinner: 6:00 Meeting 7:00

Presenter:

Rodolfo Huizar Gonzales

Presentation:

The Texas Legacy of
Don Pedro Huizar

Happy Birthday!

Apr 8

Jose (Joe) González

Apr 10

Jorge Luis García Ruiz

Apr 15

Fidel Santos

Apr 16

Judy McKee

Apr 21

Alekzandr Skye

Apr 27

Dolores Beardsley

Apr 29

Luis Martinez

Kip Owen

Our guest speaker, Rudy Huizar Gonzales, is the fifth great grandson of Don Pedro Huizar. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Comparative Cultures from the University of California Irvine, a Master's Degree in Education & Human Resource Management from Boston University in Boston, a Teacher's Certificate from U.T. El Paso, and an Educational Administrator's Certificate from Texas A&M Kingsville. He retired as an Army Captain and also retired as a Texas Educational Administrator. The name Huizar has a rich genealogy in Texas.

Governor

José (Joe) González

Deputy Governor

Joe Weathersby

Treasurer

Manny Rodriguez

Secretary

Janie Rodriguez

Chaplain

Charles Carvajal

Sergeant Major

Adam Dominguez

New Members

We extend a cordial welcome to our newest member, **Maria Spinella Preston** from Winter Garden, Florida. We thank you for your interest in our organization and for joining us in our quest to educate the public about Spain's participation in the American Revolution, especially the heroic efforts of General Bernardo de Gálvez. **Welcome aboard Maria!**

We also welcome our members from the Rio Grande Valley Chapter. They will fall under the mentorship of the San Antonio Founding Chapter and be members until they get their chapter up and running. We welcome **JD Nahas, Celina Conner, David Conner, Cheyanne Zink, Michael Zink, Joe Cantu, Joe Cavazos, Edward Rizk, Mara Moats, Stephanie Garcia M.D., and John Espinosa** (our current Governor General).

We look forward to working with all of you in the near future.



Recent Articles on the Internet

Exhibit at the Cabildo - Facebook Video Narrated by Steve Kling

This is a behind-the-scenes video of a new exhibit titled "*Gálvez and Louisiana in the American Revolution*" at the Cabildo in New Orleans. Please see the link below.

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/938386328717648>

American Revolution Exhibition in New Orleans

The Historic New Orleans Collection announced the premier of its *American Revolution: The Augmented Exhibition* that allows visitors to travel back in time to experience events such as the signing of the Declaration of Independence and Gálvez's victory at the Siege of Pensacola. Please see the link below.

<https://bizneworleans.com/hnoc-debuts-american-revolution-exhibition/>

Reexamining Spain's Role in the American Revolution

Granadero, historian, and author Jorge Luis García Ruiz gives an interview on Texas Public Radio about his new book *Revolution: Spain's Crucial Role*. Please see the link below.

<https://www.tpr.org/podcast/fronteras/2026-03-13/fronteras-reexamining-spains-crucial-role-in-the-american-revolution>

Spreading the Message Far and Wide



On Friday, March 20th, San Antonio Chapter Governor José (Joe) González gave a presentation at the Mansfield History Museum in Mansfield, Texas, which is just south of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metro area. Some of the audience members consisted of long-time reenactors, a representative of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and a college history professor. There was great fellowship and conversations afterwards. Dama Stella González also helped out. Outstanding work, Joe and Stella, of carrying out our mission to educate the public!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Folkfest

April 11 in New Braunfels

King William Parade

April 25 in San Antonio

4th of July Mandatory Rehearsal

June 27 at 9:00 a.m. at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery

42nd Annual Fourth of July Patriotic Ceremony

July 4 at 10:00 a.m. at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery

America 250 Event

October 24 in Victoria TX

Medicinal and Life Supporting Plants of Indians, Mexicans and Tejanos in Colonial Texas

AI Generated with

Additional Information and Editing by Robert Garcia, Jr.

August 30, 2025

Introduction

The daily reality of colonial Texas was one of hardship, disease, and scarcity. Frontier communities had to survive without a consistent medical system, and the natural environment became both their pharmacy and their hospital. The blending of Indigenous knowledge, Spanish Mexican folk medicine, and Catholic ritual produced a distinct medical culture that reflected resilience and creativity. Healing practices were not just practical solutions to illness but also acts of identity and faith. They reveal how deeply tied survival was to the land and to cultural continuity. ¹

- Colonial Texas lacked access to trained European doctors.
- Healing systems drew from:
 - Indigenous ecological knowledge of local plants and landscapes.
 - Spanish/Mexican humoral theory (hot/cold balance of health).
 - Catholic rituals that linked body and spirit in treatment.

Indigenous Roots of Healing

Indigenous nations across Texas relied on centuries of experimentation and observation to identify plants that relieved pain, cured infections, and restored balance. For them, medicine was inseparable from spirituality—healing involved not only herbs and roots but also ritual purification, chants, and community ceremonies. These practices were essential for daily life and later influenced Mexican settlers who adopted Native remedies when their own supplies ran short. ²

- Willow bark: brewed into teas to lower fevers and ease pain—an early form of aspirin.
- Mesquite: gum used for sore throats and eye problems; pods for stomach upset.
- Prickly pear cactus: pads used as poultices for wounds and burns; fruit eaten for digestion.
- Yaupon holly: brewed as a ritual “black drink” to cleanse body and spirit.
- Jimsonweed: carefully measured for asthma and pain, and used in vision ceremonies.
- Sweat baths: steam mixed with herbs like sage or cedar for healing and purification.

Mexican Folk Medicine in Texas

Spanish and Mexican settlers arrived with their own medical framework, rooted in Old World humoral theory. Illness was understood as an imbalance between “hot” and “cold,” and plants, foods, or rituals were chosen to restore harmony. On the frontier, however, settlers had to adapt to new plants, many of which they learned from Indigenous neighbors. This

hybrid knowledge allowed them to develop cures that were both practical and spiritually meaningful.³

- Herbal teas and remedies:
 - Yerba buena (mint): digestion, nausea, fevers.
 - Manzanilla (chamomile): infant colic, calming the stomach.
 - Epazote: expelling intestinal worms.
 - Oregano: easing coughs and respiratory distress.
- Succulent and root cures:
 - Agave: sap as antiseptic; roasted roots for stomach problems.
 - Sábila (aloe vera): poultices for burns, bites, and rashes.
- Spiritual integration: treatments accompanied by Catholic prayers, holy water, or the sign of the cross.

Role of Curanderas

No figure was more central to colonial healing than the Curandera. These women were respected as community healers, midwives, and spiritual leaders. Their role was not confined to treating the body—they addressed emotional and spiritual ailments as well. Illnesses like susto (fright) or mal de ojo (evil eye) were believed to be as real and dangerous as fevers or wounds. Through their knowledge of plants, ritual prayers, and midwifery skills, curanderas carried immense authority in frontier society.⁴

- Herbal practices:
 - Sage or eucalyptus steam for congestion.
 - Peppermint, fennel, or cinnamon teas for stomach complaints.
 - Cornmeal and herb poultices to reduce swelling.
- Midwifery traditions:
 - Cotton root bark, pennyroyal, and rue (ruda) to ease childbirth or regulate menstruation.
 - Chamomile infusions for mother and child after delivery.
- Spiritual healing:
 - Cleansing rituals with rosemary or basil.
 - Prayers and blessings to combat susto or mal de ojo.
- Community authority: curanderas embodied the blend of medicine and faith, often serving as the only dependable healers.

Voices from the Borderlands: Desiderio “Jesse” Pérez’s Account *The observations of Tejano Texas Ranger Desiderio “Jesse” Pérez offer a vivid window into the adaptability of Mexican families living along the Rio Grande in times of drought. Pérez, reflecting on the resilience of the so-called peon class, emphasized how they drew sustenance, medicines, and even confections from the desert’s plants:*

“I thought at first when I came here that the poor Mexican class of people would starve to death in such a dry country but now, I know this is the only country they could live in. This is the season of rejoicing among the poorer Mexican people along the riverfront. Drought is upon the land and cattle are starving for grass and water. But the poorer Mexican peon and his family are having a good time and rejoicing because the nopalitos are green and the tunas

are putting on the stems where a fortnight ago, bright flowers of crimson and yellow painted the desert in glowing color...

The lowly prickly pear, or nopal, is a truly wonderful plant. Its pads are cooked into dishes resembling mushrooms, its fruit is boiled down into jellies and sweets, and when fever burns, a split pad is laid across the forehead to cool the body. Cattle too survive on roasted pads when grass has failed.

Another cactus, the pitaya, yields a berry that when sweetened and mixed with goat's milk tastes like strawberry. The biznaga or 'Devil's Head Cactus' is boiled with piloncillo sugar into candy. The mesquite tree furnishes not only beans that can be pounded into meal but also leaves boiled into a remedy for sore eyes and wood for fuel and posts. Other plants like la retama were used for chest ailments, centinela as an antiseptic, and the so-called 'Indian's weed' for severe stomach colic...

Even in drought years, peon families turned pumpkins (calabaza), goats, piloncillo sugar, and tortillas into daily sustenance. They feasted on tamales, tortillas, enchiladas, pollo con arroz, and coffee or tea brewed from oak bark. Despite hardship, the people's resourcefulness kept them alive and often joyful."

Pérez's testimony illustrates how borderland families turned adversity into resilience. His words confirm that plants such as prickly pear, pitaya, biznaga, mesquite, and retama were more than simple resources—they were the foundation of both foodways and medicine in colonial and post-colonial Texas. ⁶

Continuity and Legacy

The remedies of colonial Texas did not vanish with time—they became woven into the cultural fabric of Tejano families. Mission records, family traditions, and oral histories show that many of the same plants remained in daily use well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Today, they survive not only as folk medicine but also as cultural heritage, connecting modern Mexican American households with their colonial ancestors. ⁵

- Enduring remedies:
 - Yerba buena tea still sipped for stomach upset.
 - Sábila (aloe) applied to burns and wounds.
 - Epazote used both as a flavoring and a digestive aid.

Conclusion

Medicine in colonial Texas reflected both necessity and creativity. Indigenous and Mexican communities drew upon mesquite pods, agave sap, willow bark, aloe, and countless other plants to care for their families. Curanderas and healers sustained not only health but also cultural traditions, linking body and spirit in their cures. These practices, born from the frontier, remain a living heritage.

Importantly, many of these remedies have never fully disappeared. In countless Texas families today, yerba buena is still brewed for stomach upset, sábila (aloe) is applied to burns or rashes, and epazote is added to beans to ease digestion. Midwives and folk healers in rural areas still draw upon plants such as rue (ruda) or chamomile to support mothers and children. In this way, the knowledge of colonial-era healers continues to survive in kitchens, gardens, and family traditions.

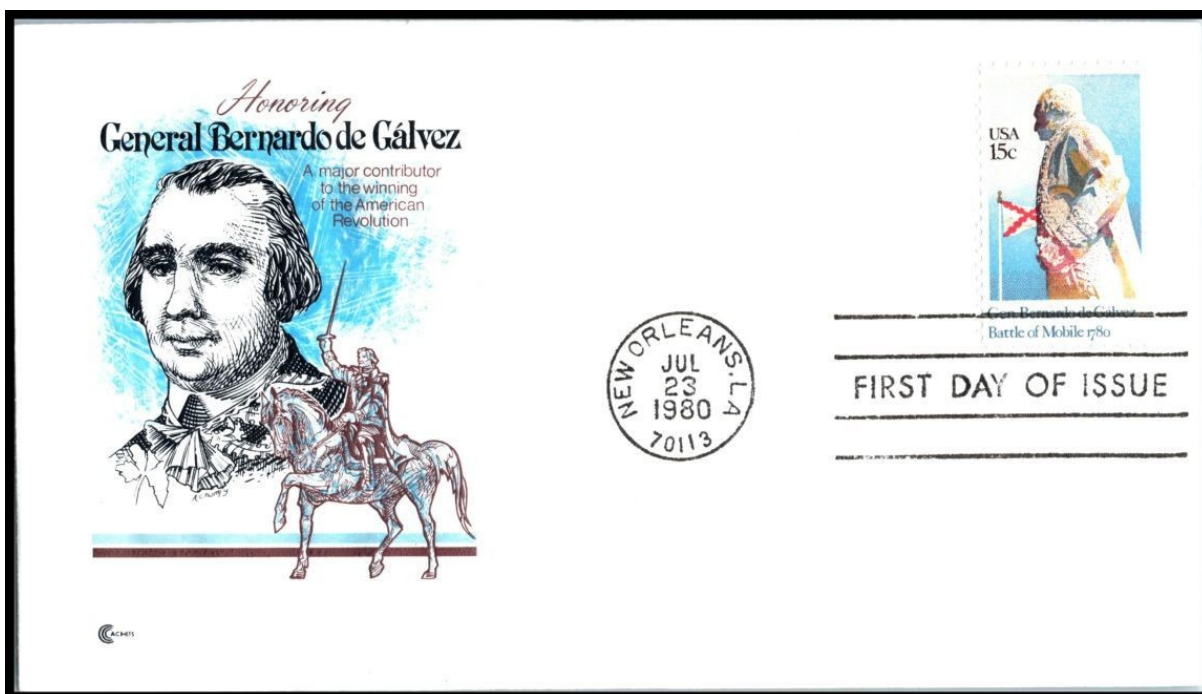
The story of medicinal and life supporting plants in Texas is not only about the past; it is about continuity. By passing remedies from grandmother to mother to child, families preserve a cultural inheritance that is as meaningful as it is practical. These traditions testify to the resilience of Tejano identity and serve as reminders that plants, have always been about survival, community, and heritage in the borderlands.

Footnotes

1. Jeffrey M. The Indian Southwest, 1580–1830: Ethnogenesis and Reinvention. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999.
2. Hudson, Charles. The Southeastern Indians. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976.
3. De León, Arnaldo. They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821–1900. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983.
4. Porter, Josiah. Medicine in Early Texas: Folk Remedies and Native Practices. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1976.
5. Barrera, Mario. “Curanderismo in the Borderlands: Folk Healing as Resistance.” Journal of Mexican American History 12, no. 3 (1998): 201–220.
6. Desiderio “Jesse” Pérez, “Memoirs of Desiderio “Jesse” Perez, A Texas Ranger 1889–1924”, edited and annotated by Robert Garcia Jr., 2024.



Below is a cachet envelope with the Gálvez postage stamp issued on July 23, 1980 celebrating the bicentennial of his victory at the Battle of Mobile.



Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez San Antonio Founding Chapter

Minutes for the meeting held

March 04, 2026 at La Fonda Restaurant

By Secretary Janie Rodriguez

Officers in Attendance: Governor Joe González, Deputy Governor Joe Weathersby, Treasurer Manny Rodriguez and Secretary Janie Rodriguez.

Attendance: Sally Avila, Diane Baird-Barger, Herb Canales, Ron Finch, Cindi Flores, Debbie Flores, Lucila Flores, Roberto Flores, Carol Ann Garcia, Robert Garcia, Edna Gravenhorst, Debbie Guerra, Jesse Guerra, Peggy Guerrero, Richard Martinez, Joe Perez, Ricky Reyes, Martin Vasquez.

The meeting was called to order at 6:58 p.m. by Governor Joe González. The Invocation was given by Deputy Governor Joe Weathersby, and Diane Baird-Barger led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Governor then reminded all that the Minutes for the February meeting had been distributed by email and asked if there were any corrections or changes. A motion was made by Manny Rodriguez and seconded by Joe Weathersby to accept the minutes. The motion passed.

Treasurer Manny Rodriguez gave a report for the month of February 2026. The Savings Account Balance for the beginning of the month of February was \$18,868.52. The end of month total for February in savings was \$18,972.88. Included are 2 CDs; a Scholarship CD at \$2,000.00 and a 2025 National Meeting CD at \$1,000.00. The checking account balance as of February 1, 2026 was \$13,685.87 and the end of month total was \$12,876.37. Please address any questions to Treasurer Manny Rodriguez or Governor Joe González. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Martin Vasquez and seconded by Ron Finch and the motion carried.

Governor Joe González announced March birthdays and "Happy Birthday" was sung by all!

Old business: Our Color Guard and Fife & Drum Corps participated in the Laredo Abrazo Ceremony and the George Washington parade in Laredo, TX on Feb 21, 2026.

New business: New Chapters are being developed in Miami and Mobile, and the joint chapter in Louisiana will split in 2 (New Orleans & Baton Rouge). Our newest Texas chapter is in its infancy. The Rio Grande Valley Chapter will be mentored by the San Antonio Founding Chapter with JD Nahas as Chair and Governor Joe Gonzalez as ex-officio member until they are a full-fledged chapter.

Committee Reports:

Membership: Joe Perez reported the membership to date is 93.

Scholarship: Chairperson Liz Perez reported that she will meet with St. Anthony HS.

Color Guard/Fife & Drum Corps: The Color Guard and Fife & Drum Corps have been asked to perform April 11 at the FolkFest in New Braunfels, and on April 25 in the King William Parade, and on October 24 for the America 250 event in Victoria, TX, and on May 18 in

Houston for their America250 event. Also on our calendar is our July 4th event and a July 23 tour of the San Antonio Municipal Archives.

Visibility: Joe Weathersby announced that the 2026 medals are in and on sale for \$10.00. We will also be selling medals on April 4th at Morgan's Wonderland.

Announcements: Those interested in attending the national meeting May 7-9 need to register. Please contact Governor Joe González if you need information. We also have a local seamstress who is working on a new soldado uniform as well as alterations for a musician's uniform. All expenditures for these uniform expenditures are covered by the generosity of the Eduard Foundation Grant awarded to us a year ago. Thank you, Ron Finch.

Joe Perez announced that the Gálvez stamp will be released April 10, 2026 in Washington D.C. We are hoping to have a stamp unveiling during our July 4th ceremony.

Program: Governor Joe González introduced the guest speaker, Mr. Martin Vasquez who portrays General Santa Anna in full uniform. His presentation answered questions about his victories, losses and his extraordinary life. After a short Q&A, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 by Governor Joe González.



A Blast From The Past

Tejeda Middle School History Fair & Culture Fest in 2017

