

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

November 3
Daylight Savings
Ends
(fall back one hour)



November 11
Veterans Day

November 12
Frosty Full Moon

November 28



November 2019

Volume 27, Number 3

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date:** November 14, 2019
- Time:** 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting
- Location:** Brenham Presbyterian Church
900 South Jackson Street, Brenham
- Directions:** From Highway 290 head north on Business 36 North (Day Street). Turn left on College Street and go two blocks to Jackson Street. The church will be on your left.
- Program:** Superb Salvias
- Speaker:** Phoebe Lake
New Leaf Nursery
- Angel:** Cathy Comiskey
- Hosts:** Lori Yeats, Becky Nichols, Diana Sellers, Barbara and Tom Solis, and Linda Yochim
- Lunch:** Thanksgiving Buffet



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings!

November is the month to give thanks for all that we are given, and I give thanks that the Pioneer Unit is such an active, vibrant, and expanding group. Be sure to welcome our new members; we get so busy at the monthly meetings that we may forget to introduce ourselves to new faces. With our new photos being update-able and printable, we are able to identify and learn names much faster. I'll be the first to admit that my remembering has been a challenge for years now, and I am thankful for any available shortcut. I am also thankful for each and every herb and flower in my garden that survived the hot summer months.

I am also greatly appreciative of all our members and prospective members who have helped over the past year to make our meetings and the Herbal Forum successful and who have given their valuable time and energy to help maintain our gardens. Special kudos as well to all the officers and committee chairs who have attended multiple board meetings and who have worked hard to keep the Unit cohesive and successful. Please think about how and when you would like to serve. Henry Flowers, as Past Chair, is working with his small committee to bring forward our next slate of Officers in 2020. I'm sure he would be happy to talk to anyone about various Board member roles.

It is time to get serious in our preparations for the 25th annual Herbal Forum at Festival Hill. There will be workshops for preparing vinegars, mustards, jams and jellies, dried herbal blends, and many other items to get our Thyme Well Spent Shoppe stocked up with goodies. All of our members have unique and useful talents, and I'm thankful for them all! Pitch in where you can and where your interests and abilities draw you, and we'll be sure to continue our success. We will be seeking volunteers to work at the Plant Sale beginning in February.

Question of the month: Why don't I get Unit listserv announcements or the monthly newsletter?

Answer: If you are not getting any Unit notifications, you are either not signed up with the listserv group or you don't have an email address. If you want to be included on our listserv and you do have an email address, please let Linda Rowlett know so she can send you an invitation to join. Joining is not automatic (you will be prompted to click and agree). Once you are on the list, you should get notifications. If you do not have an email address, you will not receive notifications, but newsletters are printed and mailed to you via "snail" mail. A volunteer receives the newsletter, prints it out, and sends it via the Post Office. This is not a quick process generally. In either case, if you have issues, please let me know if there is a problem, and we will try to find a solution.

If you haven't already, please check out the wonderful resources at either the national (HSA) or local (Pioneer Unit) websites at:

<https://www.herbsociety.org> and <http://www.herbsocietypioneer.org/>

I hope that you enjoy the holiday with family and friends. Your work in the gardens and on projects for the Herbal Forum, your decorating and cooking for our meetings, your smiling faces with friendly words — all of these things are much appreciated, and I thank you all very much. Have a wonderful Autumn and a blessed Thanksgiving!

Karen Cornwell
Unit Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
October 10, 2019

Karen Cornwell, Chair, welcomed members to the October meeting.

Kathe Forrest, Vice Chair Programs, thanked lunch host team Madeline Johnson, Susan Bame, Phoebe and Rob Lake, and Diana Reed. She introduced speakers Sara Holland and Mary Doebbeling who presented a program based on their trip to a culinary school in Oaxaca, Mexico. After the program, members were treated to a sampling of green and brown moles, tres leches cake, avocado soup, fried grasshoppers, and more.

Kathe thanked the speakers and announced the November program which will be presented by member Phoebe Lake and is entitled "Superb Salvias." She asked members to sign up to make a dish for the November Thanksgiving lunch and to sign up for the December Christmas lunch at Festival Hill which will cost members \$5.00 with the rest underwritten by the Unit. Guests may attend for \$25.00.

Also available were sign-up sheets for two workshops: one on hypertufa and one to make beeswax wraps. Some items from these workshops may be donated for Forum 2020 if enough are made.

Henry Flowers, Past Chair, announced a ceremony in the Beethoven Woods at Festival Hill at 2:00 p.m. on October 20 to dedicate an arbor and bench to Ira Bell Bathe, a long-time Festival Hill gardens volunteer. Henry asked for volunteers to help clean up this area on October 16 at 5:30 p.m.

Pat Garrett, Festival Hill Gardens Chair, asked new members who need volunteer hours to work in the gardens. The usual workday is the third Thursday of the month. Pat also shared simple syrup that she had made from prickly pear cactus.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Membership, welcomed visitors Sally Reynolds, Sandra Dudley, and Cathy Kietlinski.

Kathe Forrest has extra copies of members' photographs to share.

Cindy Nash asked members to check the glass lids on dishes they brought to the September meeting as Janie Cornelius took home the wrong lid. Her lid has 'JC' on it.

Belinda Weatherly was given a lot of small pots by Susan Lake, and they are on their way to recycling unless members want them.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary



CULINARY GROUP

The Culinary Group met and sampled a variety of herbal liqueurs and other alcoholic and nonalcoholic herbal beverages made by members in anticipation of the holidays. December's meeting will be December 4 at 11:00 in classroom 2 at Festival Hill. The topic is herbal appetizers. All are welcome to come.

The January meeting will be on Thursday January 2, instead of Wednesday. We will be making mustards for sale during the Forum.

Belinda Weatherly

November Birthdays

November 7 — Belinda Weatherly
November 14 — Jana Rinehart and Lori Yeats
November 19 — Lois Sutton
November 24 — Bev Elam and Barbara Hemmer
November 26 — Diana Reed



FORUM INFORMATION FOR NEW MEMBERS

The major annual event of the Pioneer Unit is The Herbal Forum Plant and Gift Sale at Round Top, Texas. It is held on the third weekend in March in collaboration with Round Top Festival Institute. This is a must-do event featuring top speakers, demonstrations, workshops, tastings, recipes, and literature. It is a great opportunity to learn about herbs and their uses, gardening, and much more. All Unit members and other volunteers participate in planning, product development, set-up and/or provide assistance during the two-day event.

The plant sale takes place on the grounds of Festival Hill. The gift sale (Thyme Well Spent Shop) is in a room of the Service Building at Festival Hill. The shop sells many different products including jams, jellies and chutneys, mustards, vinegars, dried seasonings, and herbal teas. Non-food items include herbal lotions; soaps and bath products; knitted, crocheted and stitched items; seeds; and much more. All products are made by members of the Unit and ideas for new items are welcomed. Please contact Pat Cox or Jane Press if you would like to be involved with the shop for Forum 2020, either by making items or working there during the two-day Forum.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We enjoyed an exciting program at our October Unit meeting with active members Mary Doebbeling and Sara Holland presenting the foods of Oaxaca, a city and a state in Mexico. The oddity of the program was the consumption of tasty roasted grasshoppers, included with learning about the Mole 'sauce' and Pans 'loaves of bread'. New HSA member at large Sally Reynolds attended as guest-mentoree of Georgia Sowers after enjoying lunch with her at Forum 2019. Prospective active members Sandra Dudley, Kay Von Minden's daughter, and Cathy Kietlinski, guest of Cathy Nitsch, were present for their third visits and have begun fulfilling their volunteer hours requirements.

Sign-up sheets for the Thanksgiving meal to be held at Brenham Presbyterian Church were available last month, and if anyone needs to sign up, please be sure to communicate with Kathe Forrest at kforrest58@gmail.com or Lori Yeats at loriyeats4@gmail.com so they may add your information to their lists. There was also a sign-up list for the December 2019 Christmas luncheon to be at Menke House after the December 12th Unit meeting. The cost is \$5 for active members and \$25 for affiliate members and guests. Several of the members have signed up, and some will need to pay their \$5 and \$25 at this month's meeting in Brenham.

Workshops are being planned so please stay abreast of these as they appear in our Pioneer Paths newsletters. For prospective active members needing to fulfill their required 2 hours garden volunteer times at each garden, you may contact Pat Garrett at pgarrett613@gmail.com or Wanda Hubbard at normanandwanda@cvctx.com for Festival Hill and Marcella Ausmus at greenfields129@hotmail.com for Sensory Garden to coordinate times. Kathe Forrest has also stepped up to help Marcella with Sensory Garden volunteer visits from prospective active members while Marcella is out on family business for a few months with her granddaughter. Kathe's email is shown above in the second paragraph. When you help out at Festival Hill, please be sure to record your time (and mileage for only this garden) in the Journal inside the rear of the kitchen side entrance of the Lettuce Lounge.

It has been brought to the attention of Membership that active member Tom Solis's correct cell number is 713-542-4303. Please cross through and correct your current yearbooks, and we will include this in next year's Yearbook and in the online yearbook for the current year. Our active member Peggy Richardson has moved to Driftwood, Texas, last Summer and decided to change her membership status to affiliate, so you may also mark her in the appropriate space in the affiliate section of your current yearbooks. As always, if you have any questions, comments, or ideas about Membership, please contact me at gzsowers@att.net or call (979) 836-8228 or Membership Assistant Linda Yochim at linda.yochim@gmail.com or call (281) 627-9090. Thank you, members, for all your great efforts; the Pioneer Unit is certainly grateful! I look forward to seeing everyone at our meeting this month.

Herbally thankful,
Georgia Sowers



PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING
October 16, 2019, Service Building, Festival Hill

Present: Karen Cornwell, Kathe Forrest, Georgia Sowers, Janie Plummer, Henry Flowers, Barbara Hemmer, Lori Yeats, Cathy Nitsch, Ann Lugg, and Pat Cox.

Programs: Kathe Forrest is trying to find a solution for the recent microphone problems. Henry suggested using the Unit's portable speaker at the next meeting although it is quite unwieldy. Kathe and Henry volunteered to research the purchase of a smaller and more easily transported speaker.

Hospitality: Lori Yeats will get help from Pam Traylor for the rest of her term since her move to Bastrop.

Membership: Georgia Sowers made a motion out of committee to ratify new members Lou Ann Phillips and Esther Hartman.

Motion: A motion was made and approved out of committee to ratify new active members Lou Ann Phillips and Esther Hartman.

Georgia made a motion out of committee to ratify as an affiliate member Peggy Richardson, who is moving to Driftwood, Texas.

Motion: A motion was made and approved out of committee to ratify Peggy Richardson as an affiliate member.

Treasurer: Janie Plummer distributed the Quarterly Income Statement and Budget Summary Report for Three Months Ending September 30, 2019.

Past Chair: Henry has put an application in the last newsletter for anyone interested in a Board position.

Standing Committee Reports

Education: Barbara Hemmer is talking with Festival Hill about having a propagation workshop there in November. A beeswax wrap workshop will be held on October 28. There will be a creams and lotions workshop in January.

Gardens: Pat Garrett will lead a work session at Festival Hill on October 17. Henry will lead a clean-up session at 5:30 p.m. on October 16 in preparation for Ira Bell Bathe's memorial dedication ceremony.

Plant Sale/Gazebo – Barbara Hemmer is not chairing the Gazebo at Forum 2020. Karen has ordered twelve new vests for Forum workers and will arrange for embroidery.

Thyme Well Spent Shop – Planning for the shop is ongoing in all areas. There will be more mustards and fewer vinegars at Forum 2020 to reflect recent sales.

Steering Committee for Forum 2020 - Plant sale flyers are ready and will be posted on the website. Forum speakers are booked. End of Forum stage presenters are needed and Henry asked for suggestions. Tony Scanapico will again act as Master of Ceremonies.

There will be a short orientation at the end of the January meeting for all.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary

The History and Mystery of Herbs Culinary or Garden Sage

As I am writing, the wind is gusting and temperatures are in the upper 40's – a great change from the upper 80's of yesterday. It is likely to be back in the 80's soon (this is Texas after all!), so I'm using the cold as an excuse to stay inside and get deskwork done. Gardening chores can wait until the wind dies down tomorrow.

With Thanksgiving not too far away and with Phoebe's talk on 'Superb Salvias' scheduled for our next general meeting, I thought that it might be nice to write about an herb which ties both topics together. That would be the venerable, yet underutilized, culinary sage – *Salvia officinalis*.

This plant is an evergreen (or perhaps more aptly "evergrey") shrubby plant native to the Mediterranean, especially the Dalmation coast of the Balkans. Its genus name comes from the Latin *salvere*, which means "to save" (sometimes also translates as "to heal") – a reference to the herb's reputation as a powerful healing plant. The specific epithet *officinalis* means that this was a prized plant of the medieval *officinarum*, which translates literally as "workshop," but in terms of plants implies apothecary – a place to gather and store herbs for drying and/or manufacture into medicinal treatments. Thus, anytime you see the terms *officinalis* or *officinarum* attached to a plant name, you'll know that it is a plant prized for its medicinal uses (and often other uses as well).



The leaves of sage are usually ovate to lanceolate in shape and are most commonly silver-green and have a velvety texture. The flowers occur in spikes in spring and are normally lavender, violet, pink or white, depending on the variety. If you take a fresh leaf and rub it between your fingers, you will learn that it contains quite a lot of essential oils. These aromatic oils have some tones of camphor and citrus and are quite unique. They lend their tastes along with a bit of bitterness to the leaves.

In cooking, a little sage goes a long way. It is a wonderful addition to egg dishes, salads, salad dressings, soups, breads, pasta dishes, cheeses and meats – especially poultry and pork. Because of its high levels of antioxidants and antibacterial properties, it has long been added to sausages and other meats as a preservative and flavoring. It is also a great addition to vegetable dishes such as beans, tomatoes, eggplant, potatoes, cabbage, squash and much more. Perhaps its most well-known culinary use is in dressing (stuffing) at Thanksgiving or Christmas. Some tell me they don't like it there. Perhaps that may be because it is overdone or, even more likely, because the cook used old, dried sage. The high oil content necessitates storing this herb at cool temperatures and perhaps not for a long time. If you have an old bottle of dried sage in your spice cabinet, I urge you to throw it away and get a new one or, better yet, grow a plant and use it fresh or freshly dry your own. My wife prefers the taste of dried sage over fresh, so we often cut a stem or two off of our live plant and dry it. When a bit is needed in a dish, just pull off a leaf and rub it between your fingers and thumb so that it crumbles – this is "rubbed sage" and no chopping is necessary – quite convenient! Try this on pizza, pastas or vegetables. At home we also like to add some dried sage to coarse salt and put it in a salt grinder for use on vegetables and other dishes.

Sage has long been cherished in many cultures. In England it was often added to ales as a way of toasting to good health, and today it is also cherished in England in Sage Derby cheese. The English are also the ones who started the tradition of smothering sage leaves in onions and adding it to bread and

sausage to create a stuffing for holiday game birds. Sage is also very important in Italian cuisine. *Pasta fagioli* is a meatless bean and pasta dish flavored with sage, and *saltimbocca alla Romana* is a rolled veal and prosciutto dish with sage. It is said that "no ravioli worth its filling" is tossed with any other coating than a browned butter sage sauce. Any true Italian pizza would also be flavored with a bit of sage (and oregano and fennel too!). In China it was so prized that it was often traded in return for black tea (*Camellia sinensis*). Commercial beverage makers of many sorts have long added the oil of sage to their liquid creations – especially vermouth and a variety of bitters.

Other uses: You may have heard of chamomile being used as a hair rinse to brighten blonde hair. Well, sage is used as a rinse to add vibrancy and to darken darker hair colors. It can also be used as a soothing agent in bath water and along with lavender has been used to make a traditional, astringent aftershave. Another traditional use is as an antiperspirant, and even today some modern herbal antiperspirants utilize sage as an ingredient.

Medicinally culinary sage is wonderful for treating mouth, throat and respiratory ailments. It can be made into a tea and is either drunk or used as a gargle. It is said to ease the digestion and to help reduce flatulence. Some studies have shown that it can also help to improve the memory, fight dementia and reduce hot flashes and sweats during menopause. To make a tea, pour one cup of hot water over 1 teaspoon of dried leaves (about 2-3 teaspoons fresh) and steep 10 minutes before straining. Drink or gargle. Its use by pregnant women is not recommended, but moderate consumption via normal culinary means is generally regarded as safe if one is pregnant.

Why should he die who has sage in his garden?

To successfully grow sage you should locate it in an area with full sun, good air circulation and a well-drained, loamy soil. Care should be taken not to overhead water it, especially during hot days. Its bane is high heat coupled with moist soil. These conditions give rise to the proliferation of root pathogens, of which sage and other herbs such as lavender are prone to have problems. Trim it back lightly on an often basis and heavily when it starts to put up new growth from the base. I personally cut it back heavily in late winter, let it bloom in the spring and then cut it back lightly once the flowers are all spent, then continuing to trim on an as-needed basis the rest of the year. Sage can be readily propagated by hardened tip cuttings or via root cuttings. Occasionally it will set seed and can be propagated that way, but it will not yield a clone and may thus have different characteristics than its parents.

Many varieties exist. Some such as purple (*S. officinalis purpurascens*), golden (*S. off.* 'Icterina' and 'Aurea') and 'Tricolor' (purple, green and white leaves) are all relatively small and pretty. Unfortunately they don't often grow well in our hot summers. Of the three, purple may be the best. There is also a dwarf form and then just plain culinary sage, but neither of them are that great for us either. Perhaps the best variety for us is 'Newe Ya'ar'. This one is a big grower and survives our hot, humid summers. It is a hybrid between *Salvia officinalis* and *Salvia fruticosa* – Greek sage – and should occasionally, if not all the time, have a "thumb-like" lobe on its leaves. Another good variety that is more compact and well-behaved is 'Berggarten'. It is a good culinary variety as well and has more rounded leaves.

In the Language of Flowers sage signifies "domestic virtue." A traditional saying says:

If the sage bush thrives and grows, the master is not master and he knows.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

Henry Flowers,
HSA Pioneer Unit Past Chair

From HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA

November Webinar

Soothing Herbs & Gut Repair

Maria Noel Groves, RH (AHG)

Wednesday, November 20, 2019 - 1pm Eastern

Heartburn, leaky gut, ulcers, gastritis, SIBO, dysbiosis, IBD, and IBS are diverse digestive disorders that plague many Americans. In spite of their range, they share a common approach in herbs and dietary to soothe and bring the body back into balance. We'll explore underlying themes of these conditions as well as the potential benefits of licorice/DGL, marshmallow root, rose petals, cinnamon, ginger, digestive bitters, fermented foods, and probiotics. Learn how to create your own digestive wellness tea based on your individual needs.

Maria Noël Groves, RH (AHG), clinical herbalist, runs Wintergreen Botanicals, nestled in the pine forests of New Hampshire. Her business is devoted to education and empowerment via classes, health consultations, and writing, with the foundational belief that good health grows in nature. She is the author of Body into Balance: An Herbal Guide to Holistic Self Care and the new Grow Your Own Herbal Remedies. Learn more about Maria and herbs at www.WintergreenBotanicals.com.





November 2019

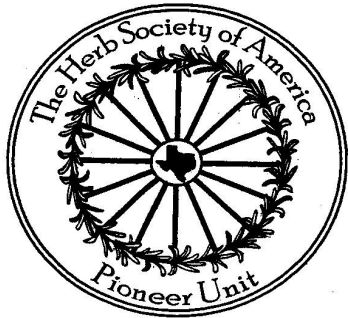


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden					1 Herb Fest Hill Country Unit	2 Herb Fair South Texas Unit
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 Pioneer Unit Meeting	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 	26	27	28
29	30	31 				CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden



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Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

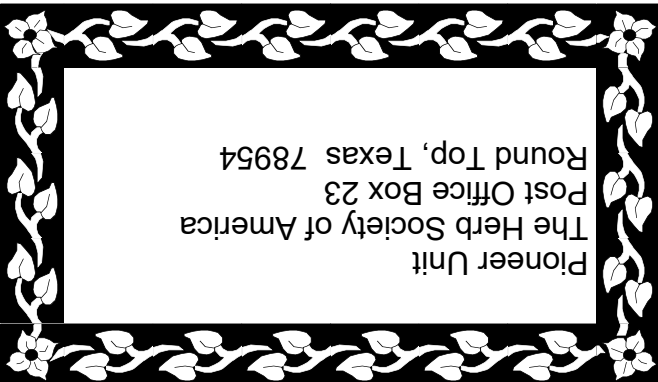
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The Mission Statement of The Herb Society of America: "To promote the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community."

Chair—Karen Cornwell

Vice Chair Programs—Kathe Forrest
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers
Treasurer—Janie Plummer



Pioneer Unit
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