

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

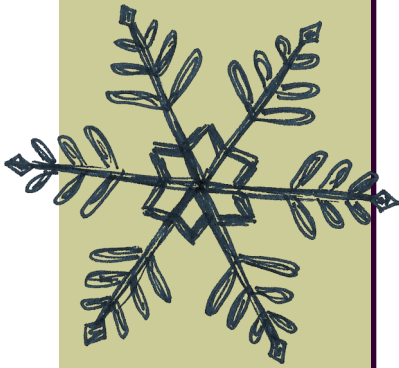
December 2024

Volume 32, Number 4

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: December 12, 2024
- Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet (Classroom)
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting (Chapel)
11:45 a.m. Lunch at Menke House
- Location: Festival Hill
Round Top, Texas
- Directions: From Highway 290, take Texas 237 south 6.6 miles to Jaster Road. Turn right on Jaster Road. Turn left into the parking lot.
- Program: A Cup of Chamomile with Peter
- Speaker: Henry Flowers
- Angel: Kathe Forrest
- Host Team: Cathy Nitsch, Ann Allen, Carroll Edwards, Tess Hartman, Royceanna Kendall, and Jill Wilson
- Lunch: Christmas Lunch at Festival Hill

December 15
Long Nights Full
Moon



December 21
Winter Solstice



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

How are you doing with your Thanksgiving leftovers? I am certain mine are multiplying. Seems like there is more and more. I had a fun time with grandchildren. My 4-year-old grandson jumped out of the car when he arrived and said in a very excited voice, "Guess what, Gigi – I'm going to eat a turkey today." When it came time to eat the turkey, he said, "No thank you to the turkey, yams, and everything else. I don't like turkey. I don't want any." He wanted a hot dog.

2024

An end to another busy and productive year has arrived. So many great accomplishments this year:

We've had a year full of wonderful, amazing programs thanks to Tess Hartman and Tory Farley. Thank you very much, ladies! I know it involves a lot of time to arrange them.

Through the efforts of Phoebe Lake and her Scholarship Committee, two members have received Unit Scholarships to delve into the herby subjects of their choice. We look forward to the presentations they will give to us. The Scholarship Committee also awarded 6 groups money to design and landscape gardens. \$200 was also given to up and coming falconers to help pay their expenses to attend a Falconer conference. Wonderful work by the Scholarship Committee.

We've had 3 new members join the Pioneer Unit this year, and 2 more are close to completing their joining requirements.

We had a successful Herbal Forum, Plant Sale and Time Well Spent Shop sale in March.

The Pioneer Unit held two programs for Brenham Elementary School that were attended by ecstatic and enthusiastic (this description doesn't even begin to describe their excitement) 2nd graders. Hats off to Debi Meschwitz for developing the program! The children were taught about the life cycle of pumpkins and were able to enjoy Debi's homemade pumpkin pie.

And, speaking of Brenham Elementary School, we are so grateful to Serena Speaker for accepting the position of Sensory Garden Chair. The Sensory Garden is an important place to help young children begin to develop an appreciation for growing things.

2025

As January arrives, the Pioneer Unit will enter a very busy time as we start preparations for March activities. I hope you all have your wings warmed up and ready to take off. There is much to be done – plants to order; jellies, mustards, lotions and handmade items to be made; and speakers to be lined up. We need everyone to be involved as much as possible. As we discussed at the November Unit meeting, the events in March are our primary fund-raising events. The money we make is what allows us to have our wonderful programs and give generously to those needing resources as they learn about gardening.

March Forum, Plant Sale, and Time Well Spent Shop

Sign-up sheets will soon go up so you can see the different areas that need your help. Please sign-up for whatever you can. We need everyone's help. Your time will be much appreciated.

I look forward to seeing you at the Pioneer Unit Christmas celebration. Have a blessed Holiday and Happy New Year.

Diana Sellers
Chair

FROM OUR PROGRAMS CHAIR

Holiday Greetings!

As we step into the winter season, our programs are flourishing with exciting subjects and opportunities to learn, grow, and share our passion for herbs. This month, we'll explore the 2025 plant of the year, Chamomile, with our guest speaker Henry Flowers. Our program will take place in the Chapel at Festival Hill, with lunch to follow in Menke House.

Warm Regards,
Tory Farley
Programs Chair



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Hey Y'all!!!

Today is Monday after our Thanksgiving celebration over the weekend. With 4 kids and their families, we had a full house! I hope your weekend was lovely!!

The weather taunts me to come outside, but I'm still cleaning up and at the computer. I hope there is one more day before pre-winter sets in so I can enjoy being outside just a little more! How about you?

Our November meeting was great fun! We were just one person (that one person you've been meaning to invite?) shy of 50 in attendance: 44 members and 5 guests: Irene Spurrier introduced us to Vicki Wiste a few months ago, who has completed almost all her member requirements; Stephen Brueggerhoff, who just needs one more monthly meeting to officially become a member; Sherry Michie came with Julia Johnson; Emily Freeman; and David Kieke, Courtney's husband.

Please take a moment at the next meeting to introduce yourself and welcome them. Excited for all the fun people we are meeting!! See you soon!!

Cammie Beierle
Membership Chair
281-844-4852

MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
November 14, 2024

The November meeting was held at St. John's United Church of Christ, Burton, Texas. Tory Farley, First Vice Chair-Programs, introduced Cristen Andrews of Small Town Farm located near San Marcos. Cristen and her partner have created a permaculture farm where Cristen grows yarrow, specifically *Achillea millefolium* (Common yarrow). This yarrow is perennial with long lasting flowers and adapts to sun and shade and most soil types. It dates to when the neanderthals used it as a medicinal plant. Yarrow can also be used in cooking, oxymels (honey/vinegar and herbs), herbal steams for colds, and for beautiful wreaths. Cristen recommended Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture by Toby Hemenway as a resource. (A free PDF of this book can be found by entering the following in a search engine: Gaia's Garden pdf free)

Tory introduced Tess Harman who shared her experience of attending the HSA Convention in Pennsylvania. She toured the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Community Gardens which are inner city gardens where people raise food for their family. These gardens bring the community together, provide healthy food, and provide a green space in the middle of the city. Tess was impressed with their "tool library" that gardeners can use to work in the garden without having to invest in tools themselves.

Cammie Beierle, Membership Chair, shared the meeting's attendance of 5 visitors and 44 members.

Royceanna Kendall, Treasurer, reported our Unit has a \$62,480.38 ending balance for October. She and Diana Sellers, Chair, filed the tax return for the Pioneer Unit on November 4th. Diana added that credit card fees are quite costly, and the Board will be discussing options at their next meeting.

Connie Gwyn, Hospitality Chair, reminded members to pay for their Christmas lunch if they plan to attend.

Pat Cox, Education Chair, shared details of a field trip to Festival Hill to be led by Julia Johnson. The morning will conclude at Busted Oaks Cellars for lunch.

Julia Johnson, Festival Hill/Pharmacy Garden Chair, encouraged members to attend the field trip to learn some history of Festival Hill and see what volunteers have accomplished. She continues to recruit volunteers and seek funding for birding trails and the greenhouse project. The greenhouse committee met after the meeting. A sign-up sheet will be available next month so members can sign up to research plants for the QR coded signs in the gardens.

Cathy Nitsche has jars and lids for jams and jellies. If you would like to be added to the informational emails, contact Cathy. Erica Menconi, Thyme Well Spent Chair, asked those making something for TWS to let her know what they are making.

Diana Sellers asked for volunteers for Forum planning. Please contact her if you would like to help plan next year's Forum.

A bountiful feast was served by Madeline Johnson, Irene Spurrier, Noreen Barker, Pat Cox, Connie Gwyn, and Patty Mills.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Hagler, Secretary

December Birthdays

December 9 — Beverly Green
 December 19 — Linda Rowlett
 December 25 — Becky Nichols
 December 31 — Phoebe Lake



Linda Rowlett (December 19) wrote: "Another birthday. I am glad they keep coming. My children and grandchildren keep surprising me by growing up and changing when I wish things could stay the same. Life just moves on, and I am trying to keep up!

"I have learned it is not a good idea to have my cat help with the Christmas cards.

"I find myself making as many connections as I can, and I am grateful to the Pioneer Unit for the friendships I have found there."

Phoebe Lake (December 31) sent the adjacent picture of a red passion vine currently blooming in her garden, and she wrote the following: "It's kinda fun to have a New Years Eve birthday — the whole world joins the celebration!

"A family story is that my father insisted my mother have the baby in 1954 so he could claim it (me) as a tax deduction for the entire year!

"If you've done the math, you'll notice this is a big birthday!

"Looking forward to the new year with a life full of gratitude. "



HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Goodbye, Rosemary. Hello, Lavender.

The Horticulture Study Group had a successful and rewarding year with rosemary. We will present our full findings along with some tastings at the February 2025 Unit Meeting. Just as a teaser, we can say that most rosemaries prefer living in the ground rather than in pots. That's not much of a spoiler, but there are varieties that can grow well in pots. For example, these photos taken in September show that Hill Hardy Rosemary did well in both containers and the ground. Rosemaries are slow growers, but Hill Hardy easily tripled in size from its 4-inch pot beginnings.



Much of our discussion at our last meeting of 2024 centered on the 2025 study herb, lavender. This will be our 6th year, and we decided that we were ready to tackle this finicky herb (or at least that is what we think about lavender). We are optimistic that there are ways to be successful in growing lavender in our area -- both in terms of varieties and growing conditions. **We invite all lavender lovers to join us in 2025.** We meet on the 4th Thursday of each month from 10:00 a.m. till noon and usually at Festival Hill. No expertise is required, just an interest in growing herbs. For more information, contact Madeline Johnson or Phoebe Lake.

Submitted by Madeline Johnson



December 2024

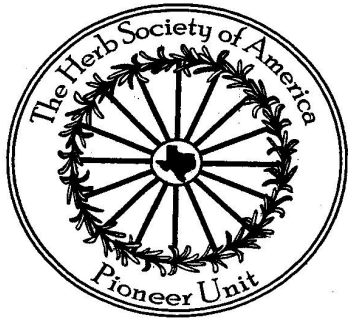


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 CG Menke House	5	6 FH Work Day 9-11	7
8	9	10	11	12 Pioneer Unit Meeting	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 SG Work Day 9-11	20	21
22	23	24	25 	26	27	28
29	30	31 			CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HSG = Horticulture Study Group HB = Herbal Blends

January 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HSG = Horticulture Study Group HB = Herbal Blends		1	2	3 FH Work Day 9-11	4
5	6	7	8 CG Menke House	9 Pioneer Unit Meeting	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 SG Work Day 9-11	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 HSG at FH 10-noon	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



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Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

Pioneer Paths is a publication of The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$10.00 per year.

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."

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Vice Chair Programs—Tory Farley

Vice Chair Membership—Cammie Beierle

Secretary—Joanna Hagler

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