



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

December 2012

Volume 20, Number 4

December 9
Chanukah

—

December 21
Winter Solstice

—

December 25
Yule

—

December 28
Long Nights Full
Moon

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: December 13, 2012

Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet (lower stone chapel)
10:00 a.m. Program followed by Meeting (upper wooden chapel)

Location: Festival Hill
Round Top

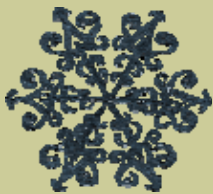
Directions: Exit Highway 290 at Texas 237 (Round Top exit).
Travel south on 237. Turn right on Jaster Road and left into the parking lot. Drive past the concert hall to the chapels.

Program: Rosemary

Speaker: Henry Flowers

Hosts: Sandy Brown, Georgia and Bob Sowers, Wanda Hubbard, and Nancy Crisman

Lunch: Dutch Treat Lunch at Menke House, Festival Hill



Message from the Chair

As I write this, I can hear the wind whistling outside my upstairs window, but I know the temperature is close to 80 degrees, which makes getting into that holiday spirit a bit difficult for me. Having grown up in New England, I miss some things about winter weather — one of the main things being that weeds did not grow for four or five months, and we could take a break from those weeding chores. (Is there anyone out there who likes weeding?)

As we work on the traditions that have meaning for our own families, we need to set aside some time to work on things for our Pioneer Unit Herbal Forum, which will be coming up soon after the New Year. I hope you are working on a project for Thyme Well Spent (either the shop or the garden). If you have any ideas for items not sold in the past, please get with Carla Lessard or Kay Von Minden. They are always pleased to have suggestions.

This month is a time of festivity for many of us, with religious holidays, the solstice, the Long Nights Full Moon, and the end of the year. This is a time that reminds us of traditions, of endings (the darkness of the longest night, the end of the year), and also of beginnings as we start a new year with the days growing longer. I hope that you have the opportunity to spend meaningful time with family and friends and that you experience the peaceful places, tranquil moments, and the quiet thoughts that nourish.

Linda L. Rowlett
Pioneer Unit Chair



Think Cold!

FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

Our many thanks and applause to Mary Mann for her "Cultural Cornucopia" presentation. We were transported on an informative time line through history with her as our tour guide. Her "edutainment" was very informative and entertaining. Many of us will never forget her women of history.

At our December 13, 2012, meeting at Festival Hill, we will welcome Henry Flowers to present 'Rosemary.' Henry is always willing to share his vast knowledge of horticulture and tricks of the trade. We will have our Holiday Bash luncheon after his presentation and our short meeting. You must have prepaid (\$20) and arranged reservations for the luncheon with Sandy Brown at the November meeting or by mailing her your name and check, by the deadline of December 6, 2012, to take part in the luncheon. We hope you will all participate in this Holiday Bash! There will be door prizes, knowledge shared, friendships nourished, and great food in a beautiful holiday setting!

Diana Reed
Program Chair



December Birthdays

December 2 — Lynn Ehler
December 8 — Dolores Rowlett
December 13 — Cathy Comiskey
December 19 — Linda Rowlett
December 31 — Gwen Barclay



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
NOVEMBER 8, 2012

Linda Rowlett, Chair, opened the meeting.

Georgia Sowers, Membership, introduced visitors Kathy LeBlanc and Pam Traylor.

Diana Reed, Programs, introduced Mary Margaret Mann, who provided members with an entertaining presentation. Following the program, Diana thanked the hostesses for the meeting and reminded everyone that the Holiday Bash is December 13th, cost is \$20, and the sign-up sheet is available at the membership table. The topic for December will be "Rosemary" and the speaker is Henry Flowers. Diana then awarded the door prizes.

Sandy Brown, standing in for Janie Plummer, Treasurer, reminded everyone that anyone attending the Holiday Bash could send their money to Janie, noting that the signup deadline was December 6th.

Verena Aeschbacher, BISD Sensory Garden, thanked all the volunteers for the seven kindergarten class readings held recently. She thanked Henry and his crew of volunteers for maintaining the gardens. Verena noted that the next teacher in-service would not be until August but that volunteer efforts were important for continuing educational efforts, in addition to Parents Night.

Henry Flowers, Garden Chair, thanked everyone assisting with the "move in" to the greenhouse on November 1st. He said the next workday in the Sensory Garden was scheduled for Saturday, November 17th. He also said that all mulch, provided by the city, has been utilized and the garden is "looking good." Henry reported that the new HSA calendar is out and is not only a "bigger and better" calendar, but it contains pictures from Round Top and other Texas gardens. The cost of the calendar is \$14.95 plus S/H. He also reported that the Curator of the National Herb Garden in D.C, Chrissy Moore, would be a speaker at Forum and there will likely be an opportunity for the Unit to meet with her when she is here, most likely following Forum.

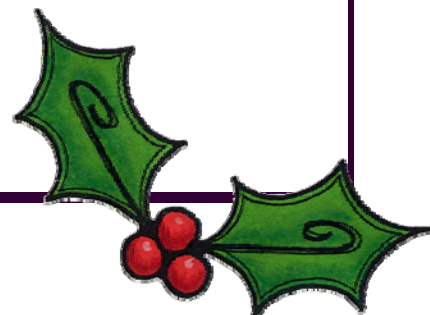
Carla Lessard, Time Well Spent, asked that anyone with fresh herbs contact her and, as always, canning jars are needed and appreciated.

Kay Scanapico, Scholarship, reported that there were no applications for the membership scholarship this year and that the deadline has since been moved to December. She encouraged anyone interested to apply, noting that results could be presented in various forms, e.g., formal presentations, articles, posters, and others defined by the scholarship winner.

Susan Lake, Pioneer Unit website, reported that its content was growing every day. She encouraged additional "likes" on Facebook, as the count of "friends" was nearly 30. Once the count is up to 30, additional helpful information will be available to the Unit. She noted her appreciation for everyone supporting her efforts. The website address is: herbsocietypioneerunit.org

June Smith, Public Relations, reported that the next book reviewed will be [The Victory Gardens of Brooklyn](#). Book Club follows lunch. The meeting was then adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Cornwell
Secretary



October 16, 2012, PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING
2350 Bluebonnet, Brenham, Texas

Attendees: Linda L. Rowlett, Diana Reed, Georgia Sowers, Janie S. Plummer, Karen Cornwell, Lynn Ehler, Ginger Heath, Henry Flowers, June Smith, Susan Lake, and Carolyn Thomas

Programs Report – Diana Reed

Diana requested that additional program suggestions be forwarded to her at any point during the year. She also noted that the old PA system has been recycled.

Membership Report – Georgia Sowers

Georgia reported that there were no proposed membership changes. She also reported that the 2012-2013 Yearbook is out and nearly all copies have been distributed.

Treasurer's Report - Janie Plummer

Approved Budget 2012-2013. Janie noted that the budget reflected the new format suggested at the July Board meeting. She noted that the general breakout in income from the Forum was approximately 67% from Thyme Well Spent (in the building) and 33% from the Gazebo.

San Antonio Trip Reconciliation. The San Antonio trip was recognized as a success. Possible targets for future trips were discussed. Excursions could be scheduled every two years.

Quarterly Income Statement For 3 Months Ending September. 30, 2012. Janie reviewed the available bank balance and income and expenses for the 1st quarter of the fiscal year.

Committee Report: Education/Special Events – Ginger Heath

A Tool Workshop in January, a Culinary Workshop in April or May, and maybe a Canning Workshop, have been tentatively scheduled. Timing of the propagation workshop and grapevine pruning will depend on environmental factors and may not be conducive to the workshop format.

The member scholarship (\$125) is still available and a discussion about extending the deadline followed. It was suggested that Book Club activities be included as a specific line item for the next budget cycle.

Motion: A motion was made to extend the member scholarship deadline. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Committee Report: Communication – June Smith

June noted a number of outstanding issues, which were discussed at length. Susan Lake provided an update of website activities, reporting the addition of a link to herbal recipes.

Committee Report: Gardens – Henry Flowers

Henry noted that he handles the garden work schedule and Verena Aeschbacher handles the educational program for the Brenham ISD Sensory Garden. Henry outlined the Unit's commitment to maintain the garden and to facilitate its use for the children, noting that Family Night meets the educational requirement.

Other Business: Henry Flowers reported that Christine Moore, Curator for the National Herb Garden in D.C., would be attending the Herbal Forum and had agreed to talk to membership while here. Following his request for input, the Board expressed interest in having a reception, for all PU members, after the plant sale.

Karen Cornwell
Secretary

From the Horticulturist at The Hill

The holiday season is once again upon us and in the garden there are various tasks to work on. Here are a few that are timely:

Protect: If you have tender plants, especially ones that are in pots, make sure to get them protected before any hard frosts. At Festival Hill we've been near freezing and many plants are singed or going dormant, but we've yet to have a hard frost or a freeze. It will come soon for sure and it always seems to come at the most inopportune moment, so get out there and make plans to protect those tender plants that you want to keep for next year. If they are in the ground and you can't protect them well, then don't risk losing them and consider the next option (below).

Propagate: Propagate those plants that are tender and that you want to have in your garden next year. It is often easier to keep small, newly propagated plants over the winter than it is to keep a mature plant. With plants such as Coleus, Vinca, many Plectranthus, Torenia, and such – those which give us a lot of color through the warm season, I like to take cuttings in the fall and propagate a few plants to keep through the winter. As warm weather gets near in the spring I can then take cuttings off these plants and start more so that they'll be ready when the time to plant them out comes around.

Now is also the time to be starting many plants from seed – culinary herbs such as dill, cilantro, chervil, fenugreek; edible flowers such as violas, calendulas, and borage; greens such as kale, chard, mustard, collards, and spinach; root crops such as turnips, beets, and radishes; and of course, flowers such as breadseed and corn poppies, larkspur, Persian jewels, Drummond phlox, and many other wildflowers that bloom in the spring. Don't forget the sweet peas too! I prefer to get them sown before Thanksgiving, but it isn't too late if you get them in the ground ASAP. They prefer a fairly rich soil and are really worth the bit of extra effort it may take to tend them because they provide such a bounteous supply of fragrant flowers in the spring.

Plant: Now is one of the best times of the year to get many plants in the ground. Hardy shrubs, trees, and perennials are best planted in fall or early winter so that they can establish a good root system before warm spring temperatures bring about top growth. If you need more trees around your home, get them planted now! They say that the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. If you didn't do that, then the best time to plant is now. Just remember to water them occasionally if it doesn't rain sufficiently. Many people lose newly planted shrubs and trees in the winter because they assume that it isn't necessary to water in winter. We can have dry spells in winter and cold dry north winds can desiccate plants, especially evergreen ones that don't go totally dormant.

Rosemary is a wonderful evergreen shrubby plant and I'll be talking about its many wonderful virtues at the December meeting. I hope to see you there!

Sensory Garden

The normal maintenance day for the Sensory Garden in December would be the Saturday before Christmas, so I'm thinking that we'll have a vacation and skip this month. We've gotten most of the garden mulched and winter plants put in the beds, so the garden is in great shape. Come spring we'll need to do a lot of trimming on the roses and perennials, so save up your energy and enjoy the holidays.

I'd like to say a special thank you to Doug Rowlett for donating his speaker's honorarium from the October meeting to the Sensory Garden and also to Susan Abouhalkah for a financial donation. Many, many thanks!

Henry Flowers
Garden Director at Festival Hill

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

In November, we welcomed Pam Traylor for her second visit with us. Pam is Cheryl Easley's friend, and we were happy to see her again. And it was a pleasure to meet Kathy LeBlanc from Chappell Hill, a former member of ours, who visited us with her friend Carla Lessard. Several of our newer members had not met Kathy, including me, so I hope she will join us at future meetings and events. Please be sure to meet these two ladies and help them to feel at home when they attend again. Welcome to both of you, Pam and Kathy! We also enjoyed having affiliate member Pamela Murski, who brought her friend and former active member Alice Kyle with her. And affiliate members Susan Abouhalkah, Peggy Cook, and Marijane Lipscomb joined us, helping to round out a good attendance for our Thanksgiving meeting.

As always, if anyone has questions about membership requirements or reporting hours, please contact me at gzsowers@att.net or call 979-836-8228. Enjoy a wonderful holiday season!

Georgia Sowers
Membership Chair



Reminder - December 13 is the deadline to apply for a member scholarship. The one requirement for the use of funds is that you share the results of your studies or project with the unit in some way. To apply send a short description of the proposed use of the funds to Kay Scanapico, or give it to her at the December meeting. Two \$125 scholarships are available.

Kay Scanapico

We still need FOUR folks to "like" our Facebook page to get us to the magic 30. Please be one of those four or get a friend to "like" us. If you are on Facebook, search for Pioneer Unit Herb Society to find us. And thanks to all those who have already joined the fun.

Susan E. L. Lake,

The HSA Pioneer Unit Botany Study Group

Ashe Juniper (*Juniperus ashei*) and Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

Botanical Name/Etymology: The genus *Juniperus* consists of 50-60 species of trees and shrubs belonging to the **Cupressaceae** (Cypress Family). *Juniperus* is the Latin name for the genus since classical times. *Virginiana* refers to the colony of Virginia, which was named for Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen. *Ashei* (1872-1932) is in honor of a senior forest inspector for the US Forest Service and a pioneer in forest research and economics (Turner, 2009).

Common Name(s): For *J. ashei*: mountain cedar, rock cedar, brake cedar, post cedar, Mexican juniper, Texas cedar, enebro, tascate, taxate, cedro.

For *J. virginiana*: red juniper, red cedar, Virginia juniper, Carolina cedar, Baton Rouge, juniper bush, pencilwood, pencil cedar.

Origin: *J. ashei* is found in range from Mexico into Missouri, with Central Texas (Edwards Plateau) having the thickest stands.

J. virginiana is found in the eastern half of Texas and throughout the eastern U.S.

History: *J. ashei* has been in cultivation since 1664. Groves on the eastern side of the Edwards Plateau were noted in 1800s. The current National Champion Ashe Juniper, at 41 feet high, is in New Braunfels, Texas. Among the Anglo settlers of Texas, the wood was used in housing construction. Many early houses in New Braunfels and Fredericksburg were constructed of *J. ashei*.

Remember Thoreau's family pencil factory? He used *J. virginiana* because of its softwood, straight grain, and freedom from defects. (Turner, 2009).

Growth Habit: Dioecious shrub or small tree to 20 feet; bark grey-brown, shredding; branchlets 4-angled mostly opposite; female cones (berries) blue-black fleshy, seeds 1-12 not winged. (*Hortus Third*, p. 615) It is often a multi-trunked tree. Male trees produce yellow pollen which dusts the landscape in the Hill Country in winter (December through February). This creates what is known as "cedar fever" for many people who have an allergic reaction to it. Ashe juniper (young trees (20-40 years old)) has a grey-white fungus in splotches on its branches. Red Cedar grows tall (40 feet in Hill Country) and has a single trunk. Research has shown that Red Cedar (*J. virginiana*) does not hybridize with Ashe juniper when it overlaps in the central part of the state.

Growth (Cultural) Requirements: Ashe Juniper likes limestone soil where it inhabits hillsides, ravines, and canyons. Red Cedar can become aggressive in disturbed sites and likes more acid soil, although it survives in most soils and where average annual rainfall is 35 inches or greater. These trees "once established, can withstand more abuse than almost any other tree we grow." (Sperry, 1991)

Propagation: Directly sown seed or transplants.

Folklore: According to Caddoan lore, if rites for the dead were not properly conducted, the deceased was in danger of rising up and running away, in which case only a fire of cedar could prevent the dead person from becoming a monkey-like "lost timber spirit." (Dorsey, 1905)

Chemistry: The wood of both species contains high levels of cedrol and cedrene, related compounds. These aromatic oils naturally inhibit rot and repel insects, such as termites and moths. Red Cedar leaves contain camphor.

Plant Parts Used: Berries (fleshy cones) and wood.

Harvest: Berries are gathered by shaking branches over a groundsheet; they are used fresh for oil distillation or dried for infusions, liquid extracts, and tinctures.

WARNING: Junipers may cause skin irritation and allergic responses.

GRAS: As a food additive it has GRAS status

Culinary Uses: German immigrants used Ashe Juniper berries to flavor sauerkraut, sauces, and stews. The berries of both species are eaten by mammals and birds. They are also used as a spice for meats

and as a ground spice mixture for brisket. To dry the berries, roast them in a 250-degree oven until they shrivel, turn black, and become crumbly. Then store them whole in an airtight container. The berry of *J. communis* is one of the main flavoring ingredients in gin, which gives it its bitter taste.

Medicinal Uses: Used to treat UTi, chronic cystitis. Moderately carminative with heat or tincture that can lessen stomach bloating and cramping. Topically, Juniper oil or salve is used for eczema and psoriasis.

WARNING: Do not use during pregnancy or in case of kidney disease.

Economic Uses: Cedarwood oil, obtained from both species (especially Ashe juniper), is commercially important as a fragrance. It is used to scent soaps, room sprays, candles, disinfectants, cosmetics, and perfumes, where it is a standard additive not only for its smell but also for its ability to prolong other fragrances. The Texas cedarwood oil industry began in Rock Springs in 1929. There are now several extracting factories in the Hill Country, and cedarwood oil is shipped all over the world. (Turner, 2009) With respect to synthetic fragrances, "In some cases it is so inexpensive to use natural sources that there is little attempt to produce a synthetic compound. This is the case with cedar (*Juniperus*) oil." (Simpson & Ogorzaly, 1995).

Aromatherapy --- Cedar oil is used to infuse massage oils because it has a calming and soothing effect on the mind. It is used in aromatic home diffusers and fragrance candles: it is believed to impart a natural feeling of calm and well-being in your home.

Pesticide and Insect Repellent – The EPA recognizes cedar oil as a natural pesticide which effectively repels insects from vegetation, human skin and various surfaces. It is considered a safe pesticide that does not pose a threat to human or animal health. As an insect repellent, cedar wood blocks are often used in closets and drawers to repel moths.

Skin Care --- Cedarwood oil is used as an antiseptic, astringent, and general anti-bacterial. It is useful in treatment of eczema, dry skin, and dandruff. Also sold for the treatment of acne.

Dye -- Light brown (berries); brown (pollen); tan to rusty brown (bark); gold (leaves). Colorfastness is good. The Yavapis made purple face paint from the berries; the Navahos prepare a mordant from the green leaves by burning them to ashes (Tull, 1987).

Other uses -- Used extensively in building construction, fence posts, and firewood in Central Texas. The Plains Indians used bark to weave baskets and mats and used smoke for purification and cleansing.

Note: In Texas common parlance, both species are called cedar. Texas has 60 place names (towns, mountains, hill, lakes, springs, etc.) that contain the word. At least 36 streams are known as Cedar Creek, ranging from Angelina County in East Texas to Brewster County in the Trans-Pecos. Yet there is not a single entity named for juniper. The word cedar is a part of everyday vocabulary. Baton Rouge (French for "red stick"), Louisiana's capital, is named for the red cedar (Turner, 2009).

It is the policy of The Herb Society of America not to advise or recommend herbs for medicinal or health use. This information is intended for educational purposes only and should not be considered as a recommendation or an endorsement of any particular medical or health treatment.

Sara Holland
November 2012



The Book Club



Remember that there will be NO Book Club meeting at the December meeting.

January's Book Club selection is The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama.

February's selection is The Stone Flower Garden by Deborah Smith.

March's selection is The Greenhouse by Audur Ava Olafsdottir.

June Smith, Book Club Chair

THE VICTORY GARDENS OF BROOKLYN

By Merrill Jean Gerber

It is 364 pages before the reader gets to the title's Victory Gardens; nevertheless the book is earthy. Spanning 100 years of history, the author spins the tale of two immigrant Jewish women, their daughters, and their daughter's daughters as Rachel and Rose try to meld the customs of their Polish heritage with their new lives, first in the tenements of New York's Lower East Side and later as they trade happiness for security in Brooklyn.

Rachel scrapes together enough money to divorce her handsome, philandering husband, only to settle for a marriage of convenience to cold, tyrannical tailor Isaac in order to provide a home for her two children. The marriage is a disaster for her daughter Ava, who is increasingly sidelined as Rachel gives birth to two daughters idolized and indulged by Isaac. Meanwhile Rachel's son Shmuel is put to work for pennies as a night guard in his tightfisted uncle's warehouse.

To escape the bleak emotional desert she faces in her mother's home, Ava, too, settles for financial security in marriage. And so the Jewish immigrant template for women continues in yet another marriage of convenience.

Although three generations of women dominate this rich stew of mothers and daughters, aunts and uncles, a couple of sons and husbands during the two World Wars have a deep psychological influence on how the women respond to life's joys and difficulties.

This earthy book opens the windows on the daily passions and the personal growth of four Jewish women in this drama sketching the not-too-distant past of America's turn-of-the-century immigrant generation.

Merrell Joan Gerber is a prize-winning author of novels and short stories. She teaches creative writing at the California Institute of Technology.

Review by June Smith

Garden Tool Maintenance Workshop January 22, 2013

The workshop will be held at Festival Hill at 9:00 am on Tuesday January 22, in the greenhouse.

Henry Flowers and Alton Ehler will demonstrate the use of the Dremel tool, file, wet stone, and grinder. They will cover sharpening of various tools including clippers, shovels, mower blades, and chainsaw blades. Alton will discuss maintenance and storage for various tools.

We will have hands-on work for those who want to learn the techniques for working with these devices. Bring the devices and tools that you want to work on with supervision to learn proper technique. Also bring safety glasses, Dremel tool, stone, file, or other sharpening tools and tools that need work.

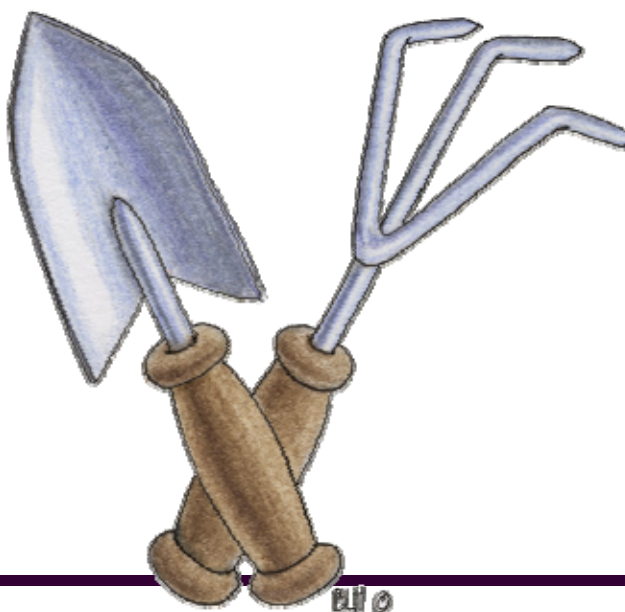
Oiling wooden handles will be demonstrated and IF your tools look like mine, you may want to bring those to improve with oil.

Bring the tools that You LOVE - the tools you particularly enjoy using along with where to purchase and the approximate cost and why they work so well for you.

Sign Up

The first eight (8) people to sign up will be in the workshop. Often we have drop outs so those over the first 8 will be on the back-up list in case someone drops out. You can sign up now before the December meeting, and the list will be at the meeting for last-minute sign-up.

Contact Carolyn Thomas by phone at 979-251-8386 or email at cthomas1138@aol.com .



CULTURAL CORNUCOPIA
Mary Mann
November 2012



December 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden					1
2	3	4 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	5	6 FH Workday 8:30 to noon Deadline to reserve Lunch for the 13th	7	8
9	10	11 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	12	13 Pioneer Unit Meeting Deadline for scholarship application	14	15
16	17	18 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	19	20 BSG 8:30 to noon	21	22
23	24	25 Christmas	26	27 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	28	29
30	31	<i>Peace</i>				

January 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	1	2	3 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	4	5
6	7	8 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	9	10 Pioneer Unit Meeting	11	12
13	14	15 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	16	17 BSG 8:30 to noon	18	19 SG Workday 8:00 to 10:00 (tentative)
20	21	22 Tool Maintenance Workshop	23	24 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	25	26
27	28	29 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	30	31		



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Volume 20, Number 4

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."

Chair—Linda L. Rowlett

Secretary—Karen Cornwell

Vice Chair Programs—Diana Reed

Treasurer—Janie Plummer

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers

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