



# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

September 2

Labor Day

—

September 19

Harvest Full Moon

—

September 22

Autumnal Equinox

(First Day of Fall)



September 2013

Volume 21, Number 1

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: September 12, 2013
- Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet  
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting
- Location: First Baptist Church  
9120 Poplar Street, Chappell Hill
- Directions: From Highway 290, travel north on F.M. 1155 (Main Street). Take the second right onto Poplar Street. The church is on the right.
- Program: History of Dilorio Farms, including Growing Herbs
- Speaker: Cheryl Cooke
- Angel: Diana Reed  
Hosts: Janie Plummer, Lois Sutton, Sara Parker, and Ginger Hoffmaster
- Lunch: Vegetables with Herbs
- Book Club: Time to make selections for the new year!



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello, everybody!

I am looking forward to a new year with the Pioneer Unit, and I hope you are as well. Once again, Diana Reed has put together an impressive list of programs, and Georgia Sowers has completed a new Yearbook that is beautiful to behold. All of the Board members and committee chairs have been working to get things back in motion.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone again at our first meeting for the new program year. We have some exciting new topics to explore together, and we should all learn something this year.

Please take note of a request elsewhere in this newsletter for assistance with the Raffle for the District Gathering. How many of you are planning to attend? The trip is not too onerous — just to Huntsville — and the topics look interesting. Although I will only be able to stay for the day Saturday, I plan to make the trip. If the listserv gets back on track, we can perhaps organize some carpooling for the event.

Speaking of the listserv, there is good news and — just for the present — bad news. The good news is that new software will make the listserv more like your regular email: if you reply to a message, your response will go only to the person who sent the message. To reply to the list, you will have to use "Reply All." The temporary bad news is that at the moment, messages can only be sent from computers inside the HCC system. This is being corrected, but I expect that the correction will not be made until after the holiday weekend — which is part of the reason this newsletter is later than usual.

Another reason that the newsletter is late is that I am always running — and sometimes I seem to be running in place. I had been thinking that life would calm down after my son's wedding this month, but we had an unexpected departure at work, and I am back working too hard again.

I hope you notice that the newsletter has been enriched with articles from June Smith and artwork from Georgia Sowers. What would you like to contribute? I would love to include items from all of you, so let's see what you can come up with.

Take care, and see you at the meeting.

Linda L. Rowlett  
Unit Chair

Harvest Month: the month of September—called *Haervest-monath* (Harvest Month) in Old England. This was a time to gather up the rest of the harvest and prepare for the winter months.

## FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

We will begin our 2013-2014 program year with a history of Dilorio Farms, including the growing of herbs. We hope you are rested up and cooling off and can join us in Chappell Hill for an informative program.

Diana Reed  
Programs Chair



**HSA MEMBERS ONLY: 10% off a year's subscription to The Essential Herbal**

Six issues per year full of fascinating in-depth articles which include recipes, crafting instructions, wild-crafting information, and herbal lore. Whether you are new to herbs or an "old hand," you'll find great information here. The print version of the magazine is available to U.S. subscribers only, who may choose either the print or the PDF version. The Essential Herbal is a herb magazine that you can prop up on the kitchen counter while trying recipes or take along to the natural food store, herb shop, or garden center to help you shop for the best stuff.

Check it out at <http://www.essentialherbal.com>. Order through the link at the HSA website, which also lists the code for obtaining the discount.

### **The Herb Society of America is seeking board members.**

Wanted: Join a group of members (the board) who are passionate about herbs, The Herb Society of America, and collaborating with fellow members sharing the same interests!

**Future Board Positions for the term - 7/1/2014 - 6/30/2017:**

**Vice President (2 year position, followed by 2 years as president, and followed by two years as nominating/awards)**

**Secretary**

**Botany & Horticulture**

MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING  
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
PIONEER UNIT  
July 13, 2013

Linda Rowlett, Chair, opened the meeting.

Georgia Sowers, Membership, introduced visitors Maxine Lain, Irene Quirnbach, Betty Pior, Cindy Nash (second visit), Beverly Green (frequent visitor), Peggy Richardson, Mike Reed, Ed Rice, Everett "Ev" Land, Linda Lain (past President and member of South Texas Unit), Olivia Sammon (Ginger Heath's granddaughter), and Dianna and Sarah Robinson (Mary Ann and Oscar Hillegeist's daughter and granddaughter).

Diana Reed, Programs, introduced Kay Scanapico, who provided members with an informative presentation on "Shakespeare's Garden," which also included entertaining highlights offered by the class of 2013 Shakespeare at Winedale students. Thanks for the efforts of the students, Dr. James Loehlin, and other participants were offered. Following the program, Diana thanked the hostesses and everyone who helped, with a special thanks to Henry Flowers for providing the herbs used for the program and table decorations. She also reminded everyone that there will be no meeting for August.

Linda Rowlett reminded members that the hospitality sheets are available for sign-up and that coordinators are much needed.

Carla Lessard, Time Well Spent Shop (TWSS), reported that there is still tea remaining for anyone wanting some. She asked that jars be returned for reuse.

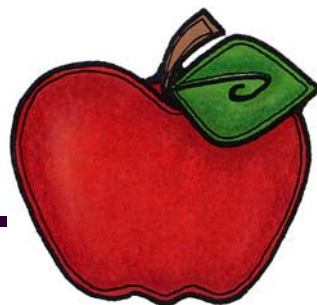
Henry Flowers, Gardens, provided summary information about EdCon, which was held last month in St. Louis. He and Billi Parus provided a program about ice creams and sorbets, and Susan Wittig Albert presented an interesting program about Herbs of the Zodiac. Henry reminded members that the Pioneer Unit sponsored Susan's program.

Henry also discussed the HSA Board decision to change EdCon to an every other year schedule after the 2015 meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia. A number of factors influenced their decision, including declining participation. HSA is surveying membership to obtain comments prior to actual implementation. It is intended that district meetings will be in the alternate years between national meetings. The next EdCon will be held in Concord, northern California, on June 19-21, 2014. Henry encouraged that members attend, suggesting that members consider coordinating vacation planning to coincide with annual gatherings.

Linda Rowlett read a note from HSA, expressing their appreciation for PU sponsorship at EdCon. Linda Lain modeled the new HSA scarf and showed the collectible basket, both of which will be available on the HSA website. She also reminded everyone about the calendar contest, noting that participation fees have been reduced. Sue Edmundson offered her perspective on the difficulty of the EdCon timing decision and reminded PU that the planning will continue as before for 2014 and 2015.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Cornwell, Secretary



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership enjoyed a slight lull in the month of August, even while finishing the draft for our new yearbook and member directory for 2013-2014. It was appreciated that the members with email and listserv access provided verification of their contact information for the new directory. A draft was presented to our printer, KwikKopy in Brenham, on August 22 for a quote and then publication! We expect to have the new books at our meeting in Chappell Hill this month, along with our HSA membership cards and letters at the registration table.

Members are reporting their hours on a timely basis, and I hope we'll have some cooler temps come fall so that we can help out at the gardens, attend workshops, and get back in the swing of visiting and enjoying our upcoming meetings and programs. I look forward to seeing you all September 12 at First Baptist Church of Chappell Hill. As always, if you have any questions about membership, please email [gzsowers@att.net](mailto:gzsowers@att.net) or call Georgia at [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228). Enjoy a good month,

Georgia Sowers  
Membership Chair

### September Birthdays

September 2 — Kay Scanapico  
 September 13 — Janie Plummer  
 September 15 — Pat Cox and Sue Edmundson  
 September 17 — Lucia Bettler  
 September 22 — Linda Hartson  
 September 25 — Charlotte Land  
 September 30 — Georgetta Welch

### Thyme Well Spent Needs

Just a request that you dry herbs for herbal blends for the Thyme Well Spent Shop. We need oregano, rosemary, thyme, and parsley dried. Please wash and dry the herbs, then either strip them from their stems before or after drying them. Place them in a brown paper bag (not plastic) and label. Deliver the dried herbs to Carla Lessard or Kay Von Minden.

Carla Lessard and Kay Von Minden  
Co Chairs for Thyme Well Spent



## Herb of September – Fennel (in particular its seed)

Fennel is a perennial member of the carrot family – the Apiaceae, to which other herbs such as dill, parsley, cilantro, chervil, and lovage belong. Its botanical name is *Foeniculum vulgare*. *Foeniculum* is derived from the Latin for hay, in reference to the plant's sweet odor, and *vulgare* is simply Latin for "common." The most common form of fennel is simply known as "sweet green fennel" and there is a lovely variant of this plant known as "bronze fennel" – it having a dusky purplish-brown coloration to its foliage. Both of these can be used for their sweetly scented and flavored foliage and for their wonderful seeds, which in particular were selected as the herb for September, and so I'll focus directly on them and their uses.

Before I do that I do want to mention briefly another form of fennel that is important – bulbing fennel. This form is an annual (to use it you have to harvest the whole plant) which produces a large swollen base at the crown. This can be chopped up and eaten raw or cooked and thus this form of fennel is more commonly viewed as a vegetable. Plant it from seed in the fall and harvest in late spring or early summer.



One further thing to mention before going on to a discussion of fennel seeds is that the fennel plant is a magnificent butterfly plant. Like many other members of the carrot family, it is a great larval plant for many types of butterflies and in particular the swallowtails. Since fennel is relatively easy to grow, I always plant lots of it for the butterflies and when they move in on my precious dill, which is an annual, I gently move the caterpillars to the fennel. They can eat all of its leaves and it normally recovers, but dill may not have a chance to do so.

Fennel seed, which is truly a fruit, is normally mature sometime in the summer (we have some ripe now – what great timing!) and can easily be harvested from dried umbels and stored for use. Fennel seed is a common additive to flavor Italian sausage (which by some other instance of great timing Melissa is cooking as I write this and I am enjoying the aroma), pizzas, and a variety of candies and desserts. The essential oil of fennel seeds is commonly extracted and used to flavor foods, sweets, and liqueurs such as anisette and sambuca (along with elderberries). It is also used in cosmetics, perfumes, and pharmaceuticals (especially in toothpastes).

Most of the fennel seed sold in the U.S. comes from Egypt, but India is listed as the largest producer in the world. India happens also to be one of the largest consumers as it is common in the Indian diet to consume raw or sugar-coated fennel seeds (mukhwas) following a meal. This is said to aid the digestion, help prevent flatulence, and also to freshen the breath. It was also traditionally thought to help improve the eyesight, perhaps the reason that the Romans called fennel the "herb of sight." Extracts of the seeds may have potential use in clearing cloudy eyes and treating glaucoma. Historical use has also purported that fennel seed helps in reducing body weight. There is no evidence that this is the case, but it certainly doesn't hurt to include it in your diet. According to Bharat Aggarwal in his book [Healing Spices](#) (which is highly recommended) fennel can also be used to treat and/or prevent the following medical issues: Alzheimer's disease, arthritis (osteo- and rheumatoid), cancer, colic, colitis, dementia, heart disease, high blood pressure, hirsutism (unwanted hair growth in women), menstrual cramps, and stroke. For more information on this I refer you to Mr. Aggarwal's book.

Fennel seed is not highly dissimilar to the seed of anise, a close cousin, and the two are sometimes used interchangeably. It is the oil of anise seed (anethole in particular) that is used to flavor licorice candy, and if you don't like the taste of licorice candy then you may not care much for fennel seeds. I'm personally not fond of either in great quantity or by themselves, but do love them as a flavoring in sausages, on pizzas, and in the middles of sweet candies - especially Les Anis de Flavigny – flavored bonbons with an anise seed in the center that are made in a former abbey in France (go to [www.anis-flavigny.com](http://www.anis-flavigny.com) for more information). Italian sausage wouldn't be the same without fennel, just as bratwurst isn't the same without a hint of nutmeg. Fennel is also an important ingredient in Chinese five spice powder; panch phoron – a spice blend from India; ras-el-hanout – a spice blend from northern Africa (especially Morocco); dukkah – an Egyptian spice mix; and many different curry and pickling blends as well. Additionally fennel is great in breads, herbal teas, eggs, fish dishes, and so much more. Some seeds (especially cumin) are improved by toasting, but that is not necessary with fennel. But if you do toast fennel seeds, they will have a more intense and sweeter flavor.

Plant some fennel plants this fall for you and the butterflies and start cooking with fennel seeds today!

*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.*

## The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit Botany Study Group Data Sheet

**Botanical Name/Etymology:** *Satureja douglasii* Benth. (Briq.) (syn. *Micromeria chamissonis* and *Clinopodium douglasii*)

**Family Name:** Lamiaceae (Mint)

**Common Name(s):** yerba buena ("good herb"), Oregon tea

**Origin:** Native to western North America – open, dry woodlands from California through Oregon and Washington and into British Columbia.

**Growth Habit:** Creeping evergreen perennial with wiry stems. Leaves are opposite, broadly ovate to rounded, with toothed margins, and are very aromatic – smelling like a nice mint. Flowers are bilabiate, small, and purple-white in coloration. They are borne in the axils from spring into late summer.

**Growth (Cultural) Requirements:** Hardy in zones 8 and 9. Prefers part shade and an evenly moist soil. Said to be drought tolerant, but grows best with occasional watering. In its native habitat it often grows under trees such as oaks or California bay. It is said to grow on clay or sandy soils. Can be container grown.

**Propagation:** seed or cuttings

**Folklore and History:** In 1846, the town of [Yerba Buena](#) was seized by the United States during the [Mexican-American War](#), and its name was changed in 1847 to [San Francisco](#), after a nearby mission. Three years later, the name was applied to a nearby rocky island; today millions of commuters drive through the tunnel on [Yerba Buena Island](#) that connects the spans of the [San Francisco – Oakland Bay Bridge](#).

**Chemistry:** 23-46% camphor, 13-22% camphene, trace to 52% pulegone, trace to 18% carvone, trace to 16% isomenthone, trace to 15% menthone, trace to 15% piperitenone. Composition is highly variable depending on moisture stress, light intensity, day temperature, and herbivory by slugs. (Tucker)

**Plant Part(s) Used:** leaves – which have a minty aroma

**Time of Harvest:** any time

**GRAS? (generally regarded as safe):** No

**Culinary Uses:** Dried and fresh leaves are often used for tea alone or blended with other herbs.

**Medicinal Uses:** It is a tonic, aromatic herb with diaphoretic, anti-arthritic, and carminative effects. Used internally as an infusion for mild fevers and digestive disorders. Used externally for rashes, prickly heat, and toothache. (Bown) It was commonly used by Spanish missionaries for its medicinal values.

**Sources for Seed or Plants:** Annie's Annuals –plants ([www.anniesannuals.com](http://www.anniesannuals.com))

**Miscellaneous Information:** Art Tucker says that it has at least five various aromas: spearmint, pennyroyal, camphor, and two different peppermint forms.

**Bibliography:** Bown, Deni 2001 [New Encyclopedia of Herbs & Their Uses](#) London: DK Publishing;  
Tucker, Arthur O. and Thomas DeBaggio 2009 [The Encyclopedia of Herbs](#) Portland: Timber Press;

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Micromeria\\_douglasii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Micromeria_douglasii) accessed 6-28-2013

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Henry Flowers, September 2013



## Grilled Vegetables

2 small zucchinis, washed, sliced in half lengthwise  
2 small summer squash, washed, sliced in half lengthwise  
2 small baby eggplants, washed, sliced in half lengthwise  
2 bell peppers, washed, cut in half  
4 green onions, washed, ends removed  
8 or 10 whole crimini mushrooms, washed

### Basic marinade:

6 garlic cloves, peeled, crushed  
¼ c. balsamic vinegar  
½ c. good quality olive oil  
Salt and ground black pepper to taste  
Favorite fresh or dried herbs and spices as desired

In a medium bowl, combine garlic, vinegar, olive oil, salt and black pepper and herbs as desired, then evenly divide between two sealable plastic bags. Add vegetables, divided between the two bags, and marinate at least 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.

Preheat grill to medium heat.

Grill vegetables just until tender. Remove from grill and serve as is, or cut vegetables into bite-size pieces and toss together in a bowl.

Makes 8 servings.

The marinade is a basic one for grilled vegetables. Feel free to add your favorite herbs, such as basil, thyme and oregano, or spice it up with crushed red peppers.

Submitted by June Smith

## HELP WANTED

Do you have photographs from any Pioneer Unit meetings or events from the past two years? If so, could you either get copies of the pictures to me asap or prepare a scrapbook page using your pictures. We generally try to take either a scrapbook or poster showing our activities to the District Gathering — and that is coming up at the end of September. I will not have time to print pictures and do scrapbook pages, but I should be able to do some pages if I have the pictures in hand.

Do you have something for the raffle for the District Gathering? Or can you assist with the raffle in some way? Please let me know.

Linda L. Rowlett



## BRENHAM ISD SENSORY GARDEN

Henry Flowers and Carolyn Thomas enjoyed a great turnout at the August Sensory Garden workday. Our new prospective member Cindy Nash was there as well as Kay Scanapico's guest from our July meeting, Betty Pior. Mary Reeves, Cheryl Easley, Joyce Lane, recent members Jane Press and Pam Traylor, Kathy LeBlanc, Carolyn, and Henry plus Bob and Georgia Sowers were all present. There was lots of good camaraderie, and Henry provided a brief introduction to the garden in the gazebo for the newer members. Different ideas were discussed with good interaction amongst all present. We enjoyed some delicious 'Carla Lessard Pumpkin Bread' with whipped sour cream and water that Carolyn provided.

Considering the high heat factor this summer, the garden is incredibly nice but did need lots of trimming. Henry, Bob, and Mary had to use a saw on some of the larger tree and bush plants!

### Georgia Sowers

In addition to Georgia's interesting report, I also received a telephone call from Susan Abouhalka who has visited the garden and was very enthusiastic about how wonderful it looked!

Wouldn't it be wonderful if even more of us could attend the next work day — making the work load lighter and the visiting more fun!



## APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR MEMBER SCHOLARSHIPS – SEPTEMBER 12

The deadline is nearing to apply for a Member Scholarship for anyone who wishes to do individual study and research. The only requirement is that the member must agree to present the results of his or her study in some way to the unit.

To apply, submit your name, phone number or email address, and a brief description of the proposed use of funds to a member of the Scholarship Committee: Kay Scanapico, Ann Allen, or Karen Springer. The Pioneer Unit annually awards up to two \$125 scholarships in October. The deadline to submit an application is by the unit meeting on September 12.

The form below may be used to apply for a scholarship.

Kay Scanapico, Scholarship Chair

\*\*\*\*\*

### Application for Member Scholarship

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Use of Funds \_\_\_\_\_



## Old Wives' Tales May Well Stand Test of Time

Old Wives' Tales may be interesting reading, but also there is much to learn – to wit:

Sow seed and transplant only with a waxing, never with a waning, moon. Many scientists now endorse the theory of the effects of lunar rhythms on the earth's magnetic field, which in turn affect growth. They claim that all water everywhere, including that inside the tiniest living organism, moves in tides like the sea.

The moon also affects the earth's atmosphere so that statistically it more likely to rain heavily (just as you would like immediately after planting) after a full or a new moon.

Never plant the same herb in the same place twice in succession, instead replacing a "hot" herb with a "cool" one – a second rule-of-thumb for rotation that will prevent exhausting the soil of the particular properties one plant or the other needs.

The flavor of your garlic will be sweeter if you crush the bulbs a little before plating to bruise them, and if you set olive stones among them.

Planting chamomile beside an ailing plant for a short while improves its health. Remove when the chamomile gets too large.

Interplant parsley in the garden to encourage bees.

Rue is bad for many herbs and may kill nearby sage, as well as basil.

A tea leaf mulch benefits camellias greatly and banana skins laid just under the soil provide important nutrients to roses.

Fill empty milk bottles or jugs with water, shake, and use for a mild fertilizer.

June Smith



## **WORMWOOD**

**By Susan Wittig Albert**

Wormwood is the bedrock of the Garden of Eden's biblical story. According to journals of a 1900s administrator of the Shakers, the herb sprang up from the track made by the serpent – the giant worm – as it was driven out of the garden, which is why it is so bitter. And when Adam and Eve were expelled as well, the wormwood formed an impenetrable hedge, barring their return and forcing them to live in a cold and unfriendly world outside the garden.

In Albert's book, chapters relating excerpts from the actual historical journals of the Shakers recounting their daily lives are alternated with an eerie China Bayles contemporary murder mystery, all taking place in the Shakers' Kentucky settlement.

The Shakers, an offshoot of the Quakers, were tagged with the name from their habit of shaking dance movements and speaking in tongues during their religious services. Among the absolutes of their religion were simplicity, hard work, and total celibacy – which at last count understandably found only three living elderly members at the group's last settlement in upstate New York, where the sect began in this country. It originated in England.

Murder, arson, and embezzlement all play major roles in the mystery which unfolds over the ownership-contested mineral spring adjoining the Shaker settlement in the green mountains of Kentucky. Plans for building a luxuriously modern commercial spa compete with the simplicity of the Shaker settlement's lifestyle -- undergirding the deadly plotline of the book.

China Bayles appears on the scene to assist her longtime friend Martha Edmond with a series of herbal lectures at the Shaker settlement of Mount Zion. The two become sleuths as they uncover authoritarian management, missing financial instruments, possible arson of a Shaker barn stabling thoroughbred horses, and finally, the midnight drowning of a friend who had unraveled clues to the nefarious financial shenanigans of the settlement's director.

While the world's people mocked the Shaker Believers for their spiritual practices, they could not help but admire their industriousness and productivity. Each settlement had its own income-producing industries which included the manufacture of brooms, woodenware, quilts, shoes, clothing, tools, and stunningly simple furniture. They also sold plants, shrubs, trees, and garden seeds.

But the Shakers were especially known for their herbal remedies at a time when herbs were the best and often the only available medicine. The Believers grew, gathered, processed, and sold more than 350 plants, shrubs, and trees, using leaves, roots, bark, flowers, and fruit. Over a period of 50 years they annually produced enough meticulously prepared herbs to make them the largest – and most reliable – supplier to the American pharmaceutical industry.

While the murder mystery casts a shadow over the Simon-pure Shaker settlement, the reader can't help but marvel at the well-ordered way of life of its inhabitants whose stated guiding principle was "Hands to work, hearts to God."

Review by June Smith

# September 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	4	5 Hypertufa workshop 9 a.m.	6	7
8	9	10 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	11	12 Pioneer Unit Meeting Scholarship applica- tion deadline	13	14
15	16	17 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	18	19 BSG	20 Newsletter deadline	21
22	23	24 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	25	26 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	27 District Gathering Huntsville	28 District Gathering Huntsville
29	30				BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden

# October 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	1 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	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	18	19
20	21	22 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	23	24 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	25 Newsletter deadline	26
27	28	29 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	30	31 FH Workday 8:30 to noon		





## PIONEER PATHS

Volume 21

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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Chair—Linda L. Rowlett      Vice Chair Programs—Diana Reed      Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers  
Secretary—Karen Cornwell      Treasurer—Janie Plummer

