



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

April 2015

Volume 22, Number 8

April 1

April Fool's Day

—

April 4

Sprouting Grass

Full Moon

—

April 5

Easter

—

April 22

Board Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Menke House

—

April 24

Arbor Day

—

April 29

Field Trip

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: April 9, 2015

Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting

Location: Round Top Church Christian Fellowship
440 East Mill Street, Round Top

Directions: Exit Highway 290 at Texas 237 (Round Top exit).
Travel south on 237. After about 7.5 miles, turn left on
East Mill Street. The Church is on your right.

Program: Ultra Premium Olive Oil and Balsamic Vinegar

Speaker: Jeff Conarko

Angel: Karen Cornwell

Hosts: Barbara Hemmer, Susan Bame, Johanna Hoiseth,
Cindy Nash, Lucy Nehrkon, and Linda Rowlett

Lunch: Mediterranean-inspired dishes



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Well, the Herbal Forum has finally come and gone. The weather definitely did not cooperate, but we persevered and it turned out to be a success despite what Mother Nature (or the Green Man if you prefer) threw at us. The Pioneer Unit Board of Directors has long discussed the possibility of catastrophic weather which could possibly do damage to our plant sale. Thankfully due to modern forecasting we could foresee an imminent freeze and take some precautions in that regard, but we can't keep rain away and it did have some effect on our overall sales. We could have definitely had better sales on Saturday if the rain had cleared up and gone away, but it didn't and we just have to live with that fact. The Unit Board has in the past discussed a variety of contingencies in regards to our sale, and the Unit keeps money in reserve in accounts that could cover the cost of purchased plants in case of a catastrophe. We also have an insurance plan through HSA headquarters that can keep us covered in the case of a variety of problems. Thankfully none of that will be needed this year, but I just wanted to reassure you all that our Board is thinking ahead in order to avoid major problems. Hopefully we will never need it and thanks to all the hard work of our members I don't think we will.

I'd like to thank each and every one of you for your support of the Herbal Forum. The educational portion of the event went well, and we had around 185 attendees this year—many repeat attendees and quite a few new ones as well. The three workshops were all basically sold out and were well-appreciated by those who did attend them. The meals went well and I thank those of you who took your lunches over to the Service Building or other locations in order to make room for our attendees in Menke House—especially on Saturday when we had to feed so many indoors.

Preliminary reports show that the gift shop and plant sale were successful financially. Unfortunately we had quite a few plants left, but our members discount sale reduced the inventory a bit and I'm making efforts to sell some plants to other organizations for their sales coming up this month. We may not make any money off of those plants, but we will recover the costs. Once all the bills and reimbursements are taken care of, we will be able to give the membership a financial report on the event.

The chairs of the various areas of the Herbal Forum have met and discussed any problems that cropped up during the event and are, as always, looking for ways to make improvements. If you have any suggestions, please let us know. I would like to say that many attendees commented in their evaluations that it was obvious that the Pioneer Unit went to a great deal of effort to help put together and run the event and that they appreciated greatly our efforts. As always they were pleased with the plant and gift sales and Herbal Forum in general.

This is the second year that we have held an auction to help raise funds for the National Herb Garden intern program, and it was even more successful this year. I'd like to thank all who donated items to this cause and to especially thank Linda Rowlett for gathering the items and putting the silent auction together. Be thinking of possible items for next year's efforts and also make note of potential items for producing for the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe and the Plant Sale Gazebo. We can always make use of some good new ideas.

Now that the event is over, we can "rest on our laurels" for a bit and I hope that you will do a bit of that by taking part in our upcoming field trip. I'm glad that I'll be able to attend this year. The HSA EdCon is coming up in May in the historic town of Williamsburg, Virginia, and it is not too late to register. Be planning ahead as well for the fall when we will have our district gathering at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, Arkansas, on the first weekend of October. They have great cabins in which to stay, but they fill up quickly so make your reservations soon.

Again, many, many thanks to you all for all of your efforts to make the Herbal Forum a success and be thinking of chili peppers for 2016!

Henry Flowers
Pioneer Unit Chair



FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

NO GUESTS FOR THE APRIL MEETING. This April meeting is open only to active members, affiliate members, and non-members who have announced their intention of joining the Pioneer Unit as an active member. Our program for the April meeting will be a lecture on olive oils and vinegars, combined with tastings. The tastings will take place during the lecture. To plan tasting quantity requirements for this meeting, we have to limit attendance as just stated. Presenting the program and tastings will be Jeff Conarko of Con Olio Oils & Vinegars from Austin. They refer to their company as Conolios.

Jeff is the owner of the company. Last June, I tried to contact him to speak to us. After leaving a message for him to call me and my not hearing back for several days, Kay and I went to their store in the Arboretum area of north Austin. The area is along Research Boulevard. (Going further back in time, this program had been highly recommended by members of our Unit's Botany Study Group, so I was very sure it would be a good one for us.) That was when I met Sarah, the lady originally scheduled to be with us. She explained Jeff's background and that he was in Europe on a buying trip. She also explained she was supposed to call me back, but with him gone she hadn't had time to do so. I mention all this to point out that we will be lectured to by a true expert who knows olive oils and vinegars and the areas where they come from, not some home grown "expert" who learned from reading a few books, etc. In talking with him this last week, I found that he's very interested in being with us because many of our group have a background to appreciate product differences. Our Unit's Angel at the April meeting, who will be helping Jeff, is Karen Cornwell. She sent out a Listserv email asking for volunteers to help her with the tastings. Please sign up with her. Her plan is to have the tasting oils and vinegars get out quickly so we can appreciate hearing about and tasting each one as Jeff discusses them.

I should also mention that when Kay and I were at the store, we tasted some of their product and they were ggoooddd. And, of course, we bought some to take home. To save our members the need to travel to Austin to buy oils and vinegars, I've asked Jeff to have product available for sale at the conclusion of our meeting's activities. He'll be able to take cash, checks and credit cards. Hope you enjoy the program.

Tony Scanapico
Programs Chair

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 11 — Susan Bame
April 22 — Ann Allen
April 24 — Catherine Gardiner
April 28 — Joan Kane
April 30 — Pat Schmidt



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA - PIONEER UNIT
MARCH 12, 2015

Henry Flowers, Chair, welcomed members to the pre-Forum working meeting. He reminded members that if they want lunch on Forum days, they must sign up today with Karen Cornwell. Henry still needs cardboard flats for Forum which can be brought to Henry in advance or to the plant sale.

Henry asked members to help out with projects either for the Thyme Well Spent Shop or in the gardens. Tony Scanapico needs volunteers to sweep and rake in the plant sale area or help in the gardens in front of the Menke House. The Pharmacy Garden needs attention from the Botany Group.

Carolyn Thomas will email her cell number to the listserv in case anyone needs her before or during Forum.

Karen Cornwell reminded members that Forum hours are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday. She has information sheets for plant sale workers to pick up today and also a copy of the work schedule which members need to check for accuracy or changes.

Carla Lessard thanked everyone for helping out today with TWSS items.

Kay Von Minden asked the person who offered her some herbal fabric to identify herself.

Betty Pior thanked the hostess team and also reminded members to sign in for today's meeting.

Cheryl Easley said garden and cookery-related books and magazine are still needed for the scholarship table and should be brought to the TWSS by Wednesday when the table will be set up.

Susan Bame reminded members that field trip sign-up is now open to guests.

Tony Scanapico announced that next month's program will include oil and vinegar tastings and products will be available for sale. The meeting is open to members and affiliates but not visitors. Carolyn Thomas asked if visitors trying to get in their three meetings before applying for membership could attend, and Tony said they could.

Tony showed members the new vests for plant sale workers and asked the men who are working the plant sale to be sure to wear one for identification as a Unit member.

The meeting was then adjourned and members continued to work on TWSS and garden projects until lunch in the Menke House at noon.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Our Forum Prep meeting in March enjoyed a wonderful turnout of membership and all contributed greatly for the following weekend's event. Affiliates present were Peggy Cook, Mary Doebbeling, Marijane Lipscomb, and Pamela Murski. Member-at-Large Alice Kyle was there with Pamela and the two of them were helpful sewing buttons on bonnets for Thyme Well Spent Shoppe. Throughout the next week so many of the members contributed greatly in setting up and preparing for the Forum and Plant Sale on the 20th and 21st of March. Membership is looking forward to recording the hours and efforts for everyone and thanks you for your time.

I had a unique pleasure at the Plant Sale visiting with a young lady, Ashley Dellagiacoma, about a special garden that her family shares with their young daughter. She related to me and Mary Doebbeling about their three-year-old beginning a baptismal garden and tending it together. She said recently the little girl harvested a carrot and ate it right away - nothing like 'fresh dug' and tasty! Ashley lives near Warrenton and expressed an interest in joining our Unit so we're looking forward to her visiting and learning more about herbs and their myriad uses. When she related her child's garden experience, it reminded me of one indelibly imprinted in my mind as a 10-year-old which I shared with Ashley and Mary. My youngest sister was born in Tripoli, Libya in December 1957 and we were living in a shared two-story home downtown with a lush garden in the back yard. There wasn't a church available to us when it came time to christen her, so my father went to the garden and brought in a beautiful lily or lotus-type flower, put water in it, and read a few verses from the Bible, then poured the water over her head. At that point he named me (the eldest) as her godmother. Just two wonderful sharing experiences of gardens amongst gardeners.

As always, if any questions or concerns about membership, please feel free to contact me at gzsowers@att.net or phone [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228). Also, any of our members are happy to share info with you as well. Look forward to seeing you all April 9th!

Herbally,
Georgia Sowers
Membership Chair



*****CONGRATULATIONS!*****

Our Volunteers of the Month for Forum were AWESOME! All of our members, active, affiliates, and even husbands (Bob Heath, Robert Nash, Dean Edmundson, perhaps some I didn't see) and non-members (Joanie Havlick, Pat Cox's friend, comes to mind) helped us at Forum this year. The Committee leaders, Carolyn Thomas, Henry Flowers, Karen Cornwell, Carla Lessard, Kay Von Minden and Kay Scanapico, Lynn and Alton Ehler, Tony Scanapico, Ann Allen, Euphanel Goad, Cindy Rollins, Betty Pior, and Barbara Hemmer, just performed a stellar job at keeping everything coordinated and running so smoothly. When I arrived Thursday afternoon, the entire grounds and Thyme Well Spent Shop seemed to be in perfect order and ready for the Forum to begin on Friday. Affiliates helping were Peggy Cook scurrying about busy as usual, Mary Doebbeling keeping the plants in order and watered (only sparingly since we had so much rain available), Marijane Lipscomb tending Registration as always, and Billi Parus was seen in Thyme Well Spent Shop and continued helping Henry at the members-only half-price sale on Tuesday following Forum. Our entire membership body deserves a huge pat on the back and gracious thanks for their hard work!

THANK YOU ALL!

*****WELCOME NEW MEMBER!*****

Pat Garrett, Wanda Hubbard's family friend, is our first active member to join in March 2015. She is a retired HISD teacher of Science and Math and held numerous special positions, such as teaching exceptionally bright (GT), multiply-handicapped, and deaf students for just a few. Pat now lives on a 17+-acre farm near Wanda and her two sons and their families in La Grange near the LCRA property, where she has plenty of room now to grow herbs, other plants and trees. Many of you and I myself have gotten to visit with her over the last several visits and at Forum, and she seems a wealth of information on various subjects. Pat's address is 7644 Hardcastle Lane, La Grange Texas 78945-4506, cell phone is [713-817-7085](tel:713-817-7085) and email is TeachTX5@aol.com. Pat's birthday is October 17 and her contact info will be in next print of yearbook come September. We will introduce and welcome her at our next meeting, and we are happy to have her as our new member. Welcome, Pat!



Reminder: April 9 meeting is the cut-off date for Field Trip Registration!!!
SCHEDULE: HOUSTON MUSEUM DISTRICT
Wednesday, April 29, 2015

TWO POINTS OF DEPARTURE AND RETURN: FESTIVAL HILL CONCERT HALL or CHAPPELL HILL FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH. When you registered, you stated which location you preferred. If for any reason you have forgotten, or have changed your mind, you **MUST** contact Susan Bame to assure your correct pick up spot. Both locations have given permission for cars to be left for the day. Neither owner is responsible for the safety of your vehicle or belongings.

****Tourists traveling by bus in the Australian Outback are warned that *the difference between a tourist and a hitchhiker is 5 minutes!* We cannot vouch for our driver's rules, but suggest you PLEASE BE ON TIME FOR ALL DEPARTURES on the schedule.**

6:45-7:00a Board and **Depart Festival Hill**, in front of Concert Hall

7:35-7:45a Board and **Depart Chappell Hill at the** First Baptist Church parking lot at the intersection of Hwy 290 at 7675 FM 2447

A small pack of mixed salty/sweet snacks will be provided for each person. Feel free to bring your coffee or a breakfast snack. You may bring shopping/cooler bags aboard the bus, if you desire. There is overhead storage and storage under bus.

9:45a Arrive Café Express/Museum of Fine Arts (MFA exhibits open at 10am)

Museum rep will meet us in Café Express to distribute sticker/passes and museum maps

10:00a Begin Museum tour: Florescence flower show, exhibits, gift shop, lunch

11:30a-12:00p Lunch Boxes will be available in Café Express from 11:30-12:00. You may eat in dining area or outside at Café Express tables.

11:30a-1:00p Lunch; complete any exhibits and shopping

1:00-1:15p Board bus and **Depart**; 15-minute tour of Hermann Park narrated by Susan Wood

1:30p Arrive Centennial Gardens and Museum of Natural Science

Take your time to enjoy the gardens, then walk across the street to MNS to get your sticker passes at the Concierge desk. This tour includes special Butterfly Exhibit, Faberge and all permanent exhibits. Other things to do: Across the street from MNS is a park-train stop, \$3.25, 20-minute trip. [Note: You do not pay at this stop, but have to get off the train at the Zoo stop and purchase a ticket if you want to reboard.] The Reflection Pool--a peaceful stroll, cool your tired feet in the water! The Japanese Gardens near the obelisk and reflection pool—a 15-minute walk from MNS.

3:45-4:00p Board Bus and **Depart** MNS for Phoenicia (Westheimer)

Aboard bus: Doug Rowlett's (homemade) Paradox Vineyard wines will be served. Also, Joanie Havlik, a Round Top resident, Pioneer Unit friend and Phoenicia 'in-law', will tell us a bit about the family and history of Phoenicia's start and success.

4:45p Arrive Phoenicia

From the in-store deli, you may want coffee/snack or to pick up a light supper to have later at home. For those with more appetite, Arpy's Deli is located just a few feet around the corner from the store entrance.

6:00-6:15p Board Bus and **Depart** Phoenicia

7:45p Arrive Chappell Hill

8:30p Arrive Festival Hill

Contacts: Susan Bame: 979-251-4208 Cindy Nash: 281-389-0550 Ginger Heath: 979-966-9146

You are encouraged to research museums online for more information on exhibits and events aimed at your special interests: mfah.org, hmns.org, hermannpark.org, flohouston.org.

Herb of the Month: Chervil for April

Chervil is an ancient herb that, like the current herb of the year Savory, is presently an underutilized and underappreciated herb, especially in this country. Chervil is also known by the names cicely, sweet cicely, gourmet's parsley, French parsley, and as *cerfeuil* in France.

Chervil is an annual herb that is a member of the carrot family—Apiaceae. It is a close cousin to parsley, dill, and fennel and like them it is a cool-season annual herb in our southerly climate. In appearance it looks like a very fine-leaf version of parsley, but unlike the rich green taste of parsley, chervil has a mild anise flavor which has been highly prized, especially in France, for culinary use. Chervil is believed to be native to the Caucasus and was spread by the Romans throughout their empire.

To grow chervil one only needs to sow seeds directly in the ground in the fall or early winter in a moderately rich soil with even moisture—the same conditions in which one would grow parsley or dill. It will grow in either full sun or light shade. When harvesting the leaves cut them all the way down at the base of the crown.

Since chervil is a mild herb, it should not be cooked for a prolonged period and should either be used uncooked or very lightly cooked at the end of the preparation of a dish. Chervil is one of the herbs in the historic mild herb blend known as *finest herbes* (along with parsley, chives, and tarragon). It is commonly blended into the Provençal-based mesclun salad mix—along with arugula, lettuce, and endive. The mild taste of chervil is a great accompaniment to new potatoes, baby carrots, mild greens, mild fish such as salmon or trout, and is great for making an herbal butter or cheese. French chefs consider it an ideal herb to add to omelettes and fritattas, but do remember to add it to the dish near to the end of cooking in order to preserve flavor.

One speculation about why chervil has not become popular in this country is that it is similar in appearance to an invasive weed known as cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*). It is also somewhat similar in appearance to the poisonous plant hemlock, famously known as the poison which led to the death of the Greek philosopher Socrates. This plant grows in the wild and one should never pick and use plants with such an appearance from the wild unless you are absolutely sure of what you are picking.

Chervil is a rich source of minerals such as calcium, potassium, phosphorous, selenium, and vitamins A, C, and D. The younger, softer leaves will contain more nutrients and are the better leaves to use for culinary purposes.

The ancient peoples of southern Europe considered chervil to be a harbinger of new life in the spring and thus it has been used in the celebration of Easter and is especially served in a soup on Holy Thursday.

A 17th century French courtesan named Ninon de Lenclos is known to have boiled chervil in water and washed her face twice daily with it in order to prevent wrinkles.

The 17th century herbalist Nicholas Culpeper wrote of chervil:

"It doth much please and warm old and cold stomach . . ."

But it was not an herb commonly used in medicine as it was perhaps considered to be too mild to be very effective.

Quite frankly it is really too late to plant chervil for use this spring, so if you want to try growing it order some seeds and make a note to sow them in your garden in October or November. Like savory, chervil is definitely an herb that we should grow and use more often in order to expand our culinary repertoire.

Grow it and enjoy!

Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit Garden Chair



REQUESTED RECIPE

YUMMY BREAKFAST SQUARES

2 cans of butter-flavored Crescent rolls
1 8-ounce package of cream cheese, room temperature
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Topping:

1 stick of butter, melted
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup sugar

Unroll 1 can of rolls into the bottom of a 9X13 inch pan. Don't press seams together. Mix cream cheese and sugar together and microwave 30 seconds or until of a spreadable consistency. Add vanilla and spread over rolls. Place second can of rolls over the top.

Pour the melted butter over the top and then sprinkle with the sugar and cinnamon that have been mixed together. Bake 20 -25 minutes at 350 degrees.

Cool slightly then cut into serving size pieces. Enjoy!



April 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden		1	2 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	3	4
5	6	7 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	8	9 Pioneer unit Meeting	10	11
12	13	14 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	15	16 FH Workday 8:30 to noon BSG	17	18
19	20	21 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	22	23 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	24	25 Herb Day Symposium South Texas Unit
26	27	28 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	29	30 FH Workday 8:30 to noon		

May 2015

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

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Vice Chair Programs—Tony Scanapico
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers

Treasurer—Janie Plummer

Pioneer Unit
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