



# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

December 2015

Volume 23, Number 4

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: December 10, 2015
- 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: Chile Peppers, 2016 Herb of the Year
- Speaker: Henry Flowers
- Angel: Georgia Sowers  
Hosts: Kay Scanapico, Cheryl Easley, Carolyn Hayes, and Pamela Murski
- Lunch: Menke House, Festival Hill

December 6 to  
December 14  
Chanukah  
—  
December 21  
Winter Solstice  
—  
December 25  
Yule and  
Long Nights Full  
Moon  
—



## Message from the Chair

Our meeting last month was wonderful - the program was very memorable, but so was the food. We have such wonderful cooks in our group and a Thanksgiving meal really serves to show that off. Many thanks again to Euphanel for letting us meet at the Round Top Retreat and for the beautiful table decorations, for the host team's great efforts, and especially to Kay Von Minden for preparing the turkey and Kay Scanapico for the ham.

Many thanks to all of you as well who came to help unload the delivery truck the following Wednesday and then helped to sort out all the plants. Not a plant was out of place when we got done and all who ordered plants seemed very pleased with what they received. It was like an early Christmas gift to ourselves and our gardens! (Now if I can just get all the ones I ordered planted!)

I will be presenting the program at the meeting this month. I hope that the meeting day will be cool because the topic is a fiery one — chile peppers, the Herb of 2016. This is a botanically, historically, and culinarily (is that a word?) fascinating plant and I'm sure that you will enjoy learning more about it, even if you are shy of eating them. Chile peppers come in a vast array of "hotness" and their flavor is much more than just the heat that so many concentrate on. Our meal following the program will be in Menke House and may have a few dishes with chile peppers in them, but we'll try to keep them on the tame side.

The greenhouse at Festival Hill is starting to get full of little plants that will be growing over the next few months in anticipation of being sold at our Herbal Forum plant sale. As soon as the new year arrives, we really need to get cracking with our plans for the event as from that point we will have just a couple of more months to go. If you need a project to keep your fingers and mind busy during the coolest and darkest time of the year, there are lots of projects for the Thyme Well Spent shop that need work, and I'm sure that our co-chairs, Louise Rice and Pat Cox, will be glad to get you something to work on or point you in the direction of a sub-committee that will be getting together to work on projects in the next months. There's lots to do and the more hands helping the merrier we all will be!

Many thanks for being such an active, enjoyable, and supportive group!

Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Henry Flowers  
Unit Chair



## FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

To everyone who participated in the November meeting grand event: a big THANK YOU. It began with a splendid gathering time before the meeting. Then we went into a fabulous program by Heidi Sheesley, detailing the plants for sale and WOW! what a Thanksgiving dinner. That meeting was the ultimate friendship experience. It was all possible because of the many hours Euphanel, her host team, and her staff spent in preparing for the day. And, of course, as we know about our members' contributions, those wonderfully prepared food dishes. What a splendid group we have for supporting our own Unit activities. The Plant Sale was a huge success. However, I'm now hearing many complaints. Well, not the typical type of complaint, but the nice ones like, "Why did I buy so many plants?" Now remember I TOLD EVERYONE THEY WERE GOING TO HAVE TO PLANT ALL THEY HAD BOUGHT. So, start digging. Actually, when Kay and I started to put in what we bought, I said the same thing to Kay. "Why did we buy so much?" Come March and the Herbal Forum Plant Sale, I suggest we establish a buddy system whereby each keeps track of what the other is buying to avoid our again buying too much. (Bet it doesn't work.)

The December meeting will begin by our gathering in the Herzstein Chapel. It's the area below ground level, under the Edit Bates Old Chapel. Most folks call down there "Kafe Kaffeine." We'll then move upstairs to the chapel named for Edit Bates Old because she provided the funding for the building's move from La Grange and its restoration. Henry Flowers, our Unit Chair and Festival Hill's Garden Director, will be the program's speaker. His topic is "Chile Peppers, 2016 Herb of the Year." That's also the theme for the 2016 Herbal Forum. Then it's a Christmas dinner in the Menke House Dining Room. Judging by the past experiences we've had when dinning there, it'll be well worth indulging in, once again.

A reminder, as Betty Pior, Hospitality Chair, said in her recent ListServe email, she'll be "accepting Christmas dinner payments until December 4." (Why that cut-off date? It's because Festival Hill's Chef, John Reynolds, has to have a count by then to order the food quantities he needs for our dinner.) The cost is \$5 for active members, \$25 for affiliates, and \$25 for guests. You may send your payment via mail as long as she receives it by December 4. Her address is: Betty Pior, P.O. Box 209, Round Top. 78954. If you need to call her, her home phone number is: [979-249-5504](tel:979-249-5504).

Hope to see y'all at the meetin'.

Tony Scanapico  
Programs Chair



**MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING  
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT (PU)  
NOVEMBER 12, 2015**

Henry Flowers, Chair, welcomed members to the November meeting and thanked Euphanel Goad for letting us have our Thanksgiving meeting at the beautiful Round Top Retreat. Henry noted that next month's meeting is at Festival Hill and if anyone else wants to sign up for lunch at the Menke House they need to do so today by seeing Georgia.

Tony Scanapico, Vice Chair-Programs, reminded members that Henry will present the program at the December meeting. Tony then introduced speaker Heidi Sheesley of Treesearch Farms who presented a slideshow of trees, shrubs, and plants available at the Farms that could be ordered today for delivery in a week. The plants are available at wholesale prices and most can be planted immediately. Tony asked for help with unloading and delivery of the plants next week.

Tony also informed members that the speaker in May 2016 will have bulbs for sale.

Door prizes were won by Oscar Hillegeist, Jean Zavoda, Susan Yancey, and Carolyn Hayes.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair-Membership, announced the visitors: Royceanna Kendall (with Cathy Comiskey), Lori Yeats (with Kay Scanapico), Patricia Hoffmaster (with her mother Caroline Gardiner), Mary Sockwell (with Euphanel Goad), Susan Yancey (guest of Henry Flowers and our newest member), Ray Hayes (with wife Carolyn Hayes), Robert Lake (with wife Phoebe Lake), and Keelia Ritch (with in-laws Pat and Mike Cox).

Pat Cox asked for additional volunteers to embroider cup towels for the Thyme Well Spent Shop and reminded members that volunteer hours could be earned by so doing.

Euphanel Goad gave the blessing and the meeting was then adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Cox, Secretary

**Believe**

October 21, 2015, PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING  
held at Menke House, Festival Hill, Round Top, Texas

Attendees: Henry Flowers, Tony Scanapico, Carolyn Thomas, Janie Plummer, Louise Rice, Karen Cornwell, Ginger Heath, Pat Cox

**Programs Report:** Tony Scanapico confirmed that November meeting speaker Heidi Sheesley of Treeseach Farms will have a list of the plants mentioned in her presentation available and members can order plants at the meeting for delivery within the next week.

**Membership Report:** It was noted that the Board needed to ratify Phoebe Lake's membership.

**Motion:** Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to ratify the membership of Phoebe Lake into the Pioneer Unit.

**Treasury Report:** Janie Plummer distributed copies of the PU Quarterly Income Statement for Three Months Ending September 30, 2015, and PU Budget Summary Report for Three Months Ending September 30, 2015.

**Motion:** Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the financial statements.

**Standing Committee Reports**

- A. *Archives and Rosemary* – Lynn Ehler is sending out Rosemary cards when needed.
- B. *Education/Special Events* - Ginger Heath is researching field trip options for the spring including a possible Austin trip and her committee will shortly be choosing our destination.
  - a. Scholarships – There were no applications for the two annual Unit scholarships and Henry suggested that in the future they be combined into one scholarship in the amount of \$250.00.
  - b. Workshops – Carolyn Thomas is organizing a vinegars workshop for November and a mustards workshop. There is a propagation workshop on October 22.
- C. *Gardens* – Henry announced a work day at the Sensory Garden on October 28 at 8:30 a.m.
- D. *Plant Sale* – Henry will get early orders for the plant sale in at the end of the month. He and others have been propagating plants for Forum by means of propagation workshops.
- E. *Thyme Well Spent* – A meeting will be held at Carolyn's house on October 28 to talk about TWSS. Cindy Nash's husband Robert has grown lots of peppers and Carolyn welcomes pepper recipes.
- F. *Herbal Forum Coordinator* – Carolyn Thomas said Forum preparations appear to be on schedule.

**New Business:** Henry attended the District Gathering at the Ozark Folk Center at the beginning of October along with 25-30 HSA members. Sara Holland is working on next year's District Gathering in Beaumont, Texas. There will be information in the newsletter including places to visit such as the Shangri-La Gardens in Orange and museums.

A new member orientation lasting about an hour will be held after the January monthly meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Cox, Secretary

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Our Unit enjoyed a great turnout at the November meeting! At least four of our guests expressed an interest in joining as active members. They include Royceanna Kendall, guest of Cathy Comiskey, and Lori Yeats, guest of Kay Scanapico, first visits for each of them. Patricia Hoffmaster was with us for her second visit with her mother Catherine Gardiner, and Ray Hayes was with his wife Carolyn Hayes for his third visit. We will look forward to these potential members becoming active! Also Robert Lake attended with his wife, our new member Phoebe Lake, and Pat and Mike Cox had their daughter-in-law Keelia Ritch with them for a second visit. And our loyal affiliate member Peggy Cook was with us, and it's always great to see her. We're happy that all of you attended, and we welcome you at meetings in future! And Susan Yancey, our newest member, was with us again for her third visit, and her membership was approved at that very meeting! Henry will welcome and introduce Susan at our meeting this month, and her contact information will be in next year's print of yearbook. Susan's address is 2523 Iris Lane, New Ulm Texas 78950-5098, home phone [979-357-2088](tel:979-357-2088) and cell [832-867-9617](tel:832-867-9617). Her email is [susan.yancey@gmail.com](mailto:susan.yancey@gmail.com) and her birthday is August 14. Susan's husband is Michael. This information was posted on the Discussion Forum, but if you missed it please update your current yearbooks.

We are almost at the halfway point of our membership year, and hours are being reported timely, thank you to all of you. Going forward there should be plenty of opportunities to attend workshops in preparation for Forum, which is only a few short months away. I'll look forward to tallying your hours that you put in to these efforts. As always, if you have any questions or comments about membership, please don't hesitate to contact me at [gzsowers@att.net](mailto:gzsowers@att.net) or call [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228).

It will be a pleasure to see you all at our December 10 meeting at Festival Hill with our luncheon at Menke House. This is always a festive get-together. So in the interim, stay warm (and try to be dry with all the rain we have had) and enjoy a wonderful Holiday and Christmas Season!

Herbs to all!  
Georgia Sowers  
Membership Chair

### December Birthdays

December 2 — Lynn Ehler  
December 8 — Dolores Rowlett  
December 9 — Beverly Green  
December 13 — Cathy Comiskey  
December 19 — Linda Rowlett  
December 31 — Phoebe Lake  
December 31 — Gwen Barclay





**\*\*\*NEW ACTIVE MEMBER!\*\*\***

We have another new member effective November 2015! Susan Yancey was invited to our Unit by Henry Flowers and was already acquainted with Linda Rowlett and some of our other members, so we're very happy to welcome her. She was born in Laredo and grew up in Houston, attending the University of Houston as an undergraduate in English/Spanish and then on to the University of Texas for a Masters in Library Science. Susan retired just last year from a legal career with Vinson & Elkins, Tenneco Inc., and McKinney Consulting. (It's easy to see how her educational and vocational backgrounds melded so nicely.) She and her husband Michael have three grown children, each in different cities and one international. They enjoy their dog Atticus and his sidekick EmmyLou the cat (love those names). Susan is an energetic soul who enjoys their cattle ranch on 50 acres near Industry, gardening, live music, books and book clubs. We will benefit from her skills, and it will be great to get to know her better. Welcome aboard to you, Susan!!

**\*\*\*CONGRATULATIONS!\*\*\***

Our volunteer of the Month this December 2015 is Candi Glancy, who joined our Unit last year -- time does fly! Candi is a loyal and active member who volunteers frequently in so many capacities, at Festival Hill and the Sensory Garden, as well as various workshops toward Forum. She has extensive knowledge and skills which benefit all of us, and she has a calm and collected attitude about what she does. It is a pleasure to help out when she is part of the group, and we are fortunate that she is one of our valued members. Thank you, Candi, for all that you do!



**Herb of December - Allspice**  
**and**  
**The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit**  
**Botany Study Group Data Sheet**



**Allspice – *Pimenta dioica***

**Botanical Name:** *Pimenta dioica* (L.) Merrill  
 -formerly *Pimenta officinalis*

**Family:** Myrtaceae (Myrtle)

**Common Names:** Allspice, piment (French, German, and Dutch), pimenta gorda (Spanish), kryddpeppar (Swedish), pepe di giamaica (Italian), pimenta da Jamaica (Portuguese), yamayski pyerets (Russian), bahar (Arabic), and orusupaisu (Japanese)

**Origin:** Native of the West Indies and Latin America. The only major spice grown, on a commercial basis, exclusively in the western hemisphere. After efforts to introduce allspice to other parts of the world, the trees failed to produce fruit.

**Part Used:** berries — handpicked, sweated and dried

**The Plant** - Trees can grow to 100 feet tall (per Deni Bown). They are slim, shedding soft, light grey outer bark every year. Branches are high above the ground bearing pairs of opposite lanceolate leaves 10 centimeters long, shiny dark-green on top, lighter below. "Male" and "female" trees are needed to produce the berries. In some cases there will be a structurally hermaphroditic tree. Scientifically it is polygamo-dioecious, meaning mostly male and female flowers on separate plants but some perfect (male and female) flowers on one plant.

In un-regulated countries, wild gathering and tree chopping has all but destroyed the species. Jamaica has government regulations to ensure good grading and gathering and has set the standard for the industry.

**Propagation:** From fresh seed squeezed by hand into a container. After 2 weeks of germinations, the first year plant is carefully tended before it even goes to the field.

**Cultivation:** Fruit does not show for 5 to 6 years and it may be 15 years before full production. A producing tree can bear for 100 years. Spacing is usually 20 foot centers so the trees can be bushy. One male tree for each 10 female trees is needed for pollination.

**History:** The physician on Columbus's second voyage discovered allspice in 1494. It was not the spice they were hunting, so not much changed as far as the amount used in Europe until the 1600's. It was imported to Spain in the 1500's, but John Ray (English botanist 1627 to 1705) was the person to name it allspice because of its cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg flavors. Others also detect ginger in the taste.



**Uses:** The Maya for centuries before the Spanish had used allspice to embalm and preserve the bodies of their leaders. By 1800 the British West Indies were exporting 1,000 tons per year. A law was passed in 1892 to prevent the United States and England from overcutting straight sticks for umbrella handles and walking sticks. Honduras today uses the essential oil as an antifungal. The leaves for a tea should be used for only a day or so - not regularly. The leaves contain the same aromatic substances as the berries - primarily eugenol, as also found in clove. In Belize, leaves and berries are still used in tea for digestive upset, for bathing, for cramps, for foot fungus, for toothache, and the berries are used in meats, cereals, and liqueurs. Worldwide, condiments, perfumes, cosmetics, Benedictine and Chartreuse use allspice. In the United States, baked goods, desserts, grains, meat stews, hot cereals, and pickles have allspice as an ingredient. The Scandinavians use it in commercial fish barrels from the catch area to the docks. Germans use piment in sausage, and in France it is used in marinades and some mincemeat. Worldwide, more tons may be used in ketchup than in any other form.

**Pimento Dram** - Chuck Daggart (10/2005)

2 ¼ cups 151 proof Lemon Hart Demerara rum

½ cup whole dry allspice berries

3 cups water

1 ½ pounds brown sugar (or Demerara sugar which is darker)

-for instructions see web site in bibliography below

**Bibliography:**

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-National Geographic Society. 2008. Edible Plants of the World. Washington, D.C.

<http://www.cocktailchronicles.com/2005/10/30/adventures-in-kitchen-mixology-pimento>  
12/15/2011

Submitted by Mary Reeves

## Thyme Well Spent Shop

Kay Von Minden makes some really nice shopping style bags for the Thyme Well Spent Shop from decorative plastic seed or feed bags. If you have any of these bags, please save them and give them to Kay so she can make more.

Don't throw away those old jeans! They can be used to make jean purses. If you have any you can't wear anymore, please give them to Jane Press or Cathy Comiskey.

Dried parsley is still needed for the dried seasoning mixes. Please give the parsley to Kay Scanapico by the December meeting. Susan Lake is still collecting seeds so continue to give her any you collect from your garden. The herbs Cathy Comiskey needs for the herbal teas are elderberries, rosella, lemon balm, chamomile, lavender, peppermint, rose hips, and spearmint. Cathy needs the herbs no later than the January meeting.

Thanks so much for all your efforts!  
Pat Cox and Louise Rice  
Thyme Well Spent Co-Chairs



## REQUESTED RECIPE

### Breakfast Pie


- 1 pound pan sausage
- 1 can (10 ounces) tomatoes and green chilies
- 2 cups grated cheese, divided
- 4 eggs, beaten slightly
- 5 ounces evaporated milk
- 2 unbaked pie shells

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Brown sausage; add tomatoes and chilies. Mix in 1 ½ cups cheese and divide evenly into pie shells. Mix eggs and milk and pour evenly over sausage mixture; top with remaining cheese. Bake for 40 – 45 minutes until center of each pie is set. Makes 16 servings.

Serving size: 1 slice. Per serving: 265 calories, 12 g protein, 18.2 g fat, 9.5 g carbohydrates, 0.2 g fiber, 489 mg sodium, 94 mg cholesterol.


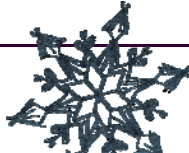
Recipe from the Fayette Electric Cooperative magazine.

# December 2015

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 FH Workday 8:30 to noon BSG	18	19
20	21	22 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	23	24	25 	26
27	28	29 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	30	31		



# January 2016

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	9
10	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	22	23
24	25	26 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	27	28 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	29	30
31						



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Volume 23, 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.

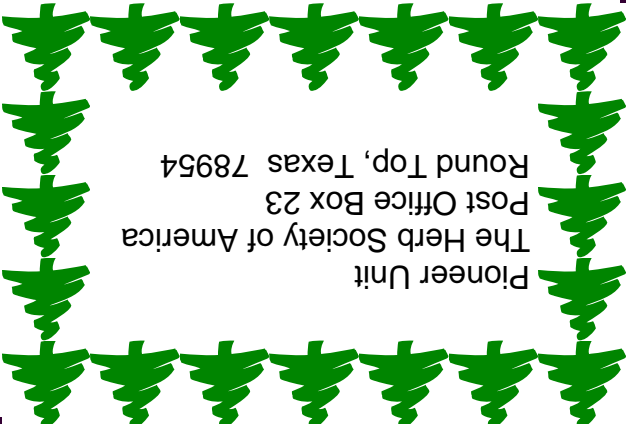
The Mission Statement of The Herb Society of America: "To promote the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community."

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Chair—Henry Flowers

Vice Chair Programs—Tony Scanapico  
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers  
Treasurer—Janie Plummer



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