



Pioneer Paths

August 2016

Volume 23, Number 12

August 12
Perseid Meteor
Shower Peak

—
August 18
Green Corn Full Moon



—
September 8
Pioneer Unit Meeting

Celebrating August, the month of new beginnings!

Remember how wet the spring was? Seems like a distant memory now. It is hot and dry, and it is always hard to keep plants happy in August. Imagine how hard it is to keep up with Festival Hill and Sensory Gardens! If you live close so you can get there before the heat of the day sets in, please consider a watering session. Just let Henry Flowers or Susan Bame know if you have some extra time to help. It's a good way to put in some volunteer hours during the summer. I know it would be much appreciated.

My big surprise this summer is how well my Big Momma's Turks Cap from TreeSearch Farms has been doing. I planted it towards the back of my property, knowing that watering would be difficult, but it has grown huge and beautiful! I really celebrate plants that survive with little or no water! My oregano is struggling, but thyme seems to be a survivor.

Even though it is really hot out there, we still have projects to work on. Right now is a good time for TWSS sewing projects. I like to do them during the winter, but when you can't get outside in the summer, it's a good way to keep 'cabin fever' at bay. We always need dried herbs for making blends and seeds collected as well. Remember to count your volunteer hours at any of these preparation tasks. Please talk to or email Pat Cox or Louise Rice if you have questions.

Officers of the Board for 2016-2017 are: Karen Cornwell, Chair; Phoebe Lake, 1st Vice Chair (Programs); Georgia Sowers, 2nd Vice Chair (Membership); Pat Cox, Secretary; Lucy Nehrkorn, Treasurer; Henry Flowers, Past Chair. Our Standing Committee Chairs are: Pam Traylor, Hospitality; Lynn Ehler, Archives/Rosemary; Education is still needing a chair (or co-chairs?); Kay Robbins, Scholarship; Henry Flowers, Gardens, assisted by Susan Bame (Sensory Gardens); Cindy Nash, Communications, assisted by Linda Rowlett (Newsletter/listserve) and Susan Lake (web offerings); Pat Cox and Louise Rice, Co-chairs for the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe. Please offer your assistance to any of these Board Members for their important Unit activities according to your time and interest. I know they appreciate your support and it is the responsibility of each member to assist, as well as enjoy, the fruits of their efforts.

This fall the HSA South Central District Gathering will be in Beaumont, Texas, October 28 and 29. Be sure to get it on your calendars as it will be a great time. More information is available in this newsletter.

Because we don't have a meeting in August, I'll wish you a wonderful summer and hope to see you at our September meeting at Festival Hill. If there are any needed changes to your information in the Yearbook, please let Phoebe Lake or me know ASAP as we are planning to have that document ready to be sent to the printer soon.

Karen Cornwell
Unit Chair

From Your New Programs Chair

Let me begin by saying how grateful I am to Tony Scanapico for so graciously handing over the reins of Programs Chair. As well as providing guidance, he included ideas for future speakers.

Speaking of the future, we have a terrific lineup for the coming year!

Just to whet your appetite for things to come:

We will begin the year in September with a trip around the world of pharmaceutical plants presented by our very own Botany Study Group.

Also this fall we'll learn about the latest and greatest plants from Monrovia Nurseries, expand our knowledge of ornamental trees, and hear about Christmas herbs.

The New Year opens with a fun cooking talk and demonstration followed by a program on lavenders.

Spring brings us back to Bats of Austin, then a look at Mr. McGregor's garden followed by tips and tricks for organic gardeners.

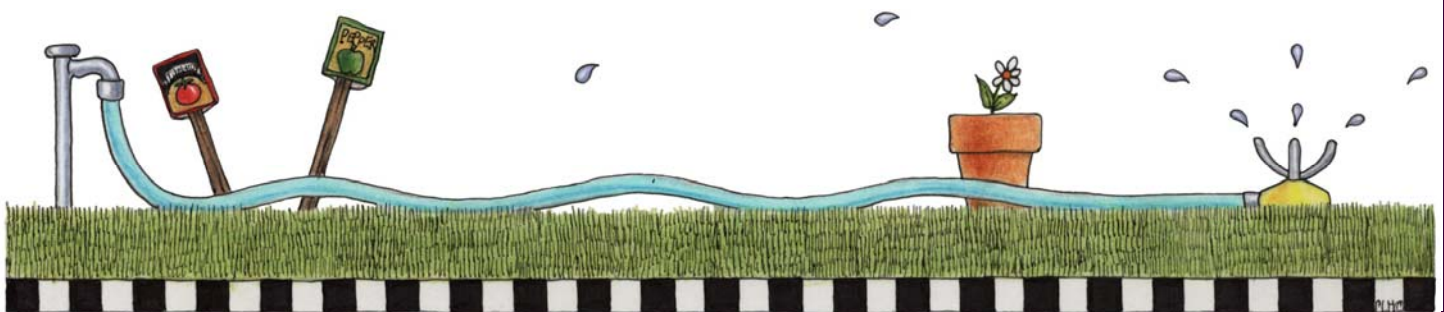
Next, it's all about using herbs to attract beneficial insects and brushing up on our basic botany.

As you can see, it's quite a palette of topics!

Although we're set for this year, I'm looking for great speakers and topics for next year, so feel free to share your ideas with me.

Hope you're looking forward to the year ahead as much as I am!

Phoebe Lake
Programs Chair



**MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT (PU)
July 14, 2016**

Karen Cornwell, Chair, welcomed members to the July meeting and introduced our new Vice Chair for Programs: Phoebe Lake. Phoebe introduced today's speaker, John Thomas of Wildseed Farms in Fredericksburg, who had some valuable advice on growing Texas wildflowers and how to get the best results and how fall rain affects the crop. He also distributed Wildseed Farms catalogs to members.

Phoebe reminded members there is no Unit meeting in August. The September program will be presented by the Pioneer Unit's Botany Study Group at Festival Hill.

Karen introduced new Hospitality Chair Pam Traylor and asked members to sign up for host/hostess teams for the coming year.

Karen also introduced new Communications Chair Cindy Nash and Scholarship Chair Kay Robbins.

Mary Doebbeling talked about the upcoming District Gathering in Beaumont on October 28-29. A block of rooms is reserved at the Beaumont Holiday Inn. A meet-and-greet will take place on the evening of the 28th at the Botanical Gardens hosted by the Southeast Texas Unit. The next day Henry Flowers and a local speaker will present talks, followed by a box lunch at the Shangri-La Gardens in Orange, including tours of the river and gardens. That evening there will be a Silent Auction and a craft-sharing table.

Louise Rice, Thyme Well Spent Shoppe, asked for volunteers to take home one of the vinegars from Forum 2016 and make suggestions for how to use it for Forum 2017. She also asked for the return of empty jelly/mustard/vinegar jars for use at next Forum and for sewers/embroiderers (other than those already contacted) willing to make stitched items for the shop. Louise reminded potential volunteers that all the work they do counts towards the annual hours requirement for the Unit.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair-Membership, introduced visitors Joyce Caddell (guest of Wanda Hubbard), Mary Sockwell (guest of Euphanel Goad), and Janie Cornelius, Bonnie Lout and Belinda Weatherly (guests of Susan Yancey). Also attending were Wanda's husband Norman, Susan's husband Mike, and Belinda's husband Jim.

Betty Pior thanked speaker angel Carolyn Thomas and the lunch hostess team and welcomed Pam Traylor as the new Hospitality Chair taking over from her. Door prizes were won by Bob Sowers, Carla Lessard, and Ginger Heath.

Henry Flowers announced that the final concerts of the 2016 Summer Season at Festival Hill will be this weekend and encouraged members to attend.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary

MEMBER SCHOLARSHIPS

Reminder: September 8th is the deadline to apply for a member scholarship.

Is there an area related to the use and delight of herbs that you would like to research or study? Or would you like to enhance your skills in a way that would benefit the Pioneer Unit? You should apply for a member scholarship to help finance your study. After completing the activity, the member must present that activity's results in some way to the Pioneer Unit membership or use the skills learned to benefit the Unit. Up to two scholarship awards of \$125 each will be presented in October. Each scholarship can be awarded to an individual working alone or to a group of individuals who would be working together.

To apply, complete and submit the below form to a member of the Scholarship Committee: Kay Robbins, Chair. The submission must be made by the end of the Unit's September 8th meeting.

Application for 2016 Member Scholarship

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Proposed Use of Funds _____

THYME WELL SPENT

We ask all members to please remember we like to recycle, so please save any jars and bottles from products you purchased from the Thyme Well Spent Shop. We also need 8-ounce jelly jars and any fruits such as figs, berries and peaches. Any dried herbs such as oregano, basil, thyme, rosemary, lemon verbena, elderberries, mints, dill and parsley you have can be used in our dried seasonings and teas. You can give these items to Pat Cox or Louise Rice and we will get them to the right person. Any seeds that you collect can be given to Susan Lake.

If you have any new ideas for items to sell in the Thyme Well Spent Shop, please let us know. We are open to new ideas!

Thanks a lot!
Pat Cox and Louise Rice
Thyme Well Spent Shop Co Chairs



MEMBER INFORMATION

Our new membership year beginning last month had a great turnout of active and affiliate members, including several prospective members. Wanda Hubbard brought her friend Joyce Caddell for her first visit with us, and Norm Hubbard accompanied them. All three of Susan Yancey's herb friends, Janie Cornelius, Bonnie Lout and Belinda Weatherly, were in attendance for their second and third visits. Belinda's husband Jim Weatherly was with her, as was Susan's husband Mike Yancey. Also, Mary Sockwell was with Euphanel Goad again. All of these ladies are working toward becoming active members, for which we are happy.

Membership cards for the new year 2016 to 2017 were at the meeting and will be at our September meeting also. Our Annual Report has been submitted with all active and affiliate members renewed. Draft work will begin now on the new yearbook and membership directory for 2016 to 2017. Any changes and corrections to members' contact information needs to be reported to membership to be current in the next yearbook. Email is gzsowers@att.net and phone [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228). Pam Traylor's email has changed to pamtraylor@ymail.com (without the '.' between 'm' and 't'). Please update your current records with this change. And Lynn Ehler's correct email is ehler3138@att.net, which has been corrected earlier but just a reminder.

I hope you all enjoy the rest of your summer and stay cool until we meet September 8th at the Festival Hill Herzstein & Old Chapels.

Herbally,
Georgia Sowers
Membership Chair

SCREEN BACKGROUND: If you like to change your computer screen background regularly and you want to show your love of herbs, you can download a background of the Herb of the Month at the Herb Society of America website each month. Go to herbsociety.org and use the search box to find computer backgrounds.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

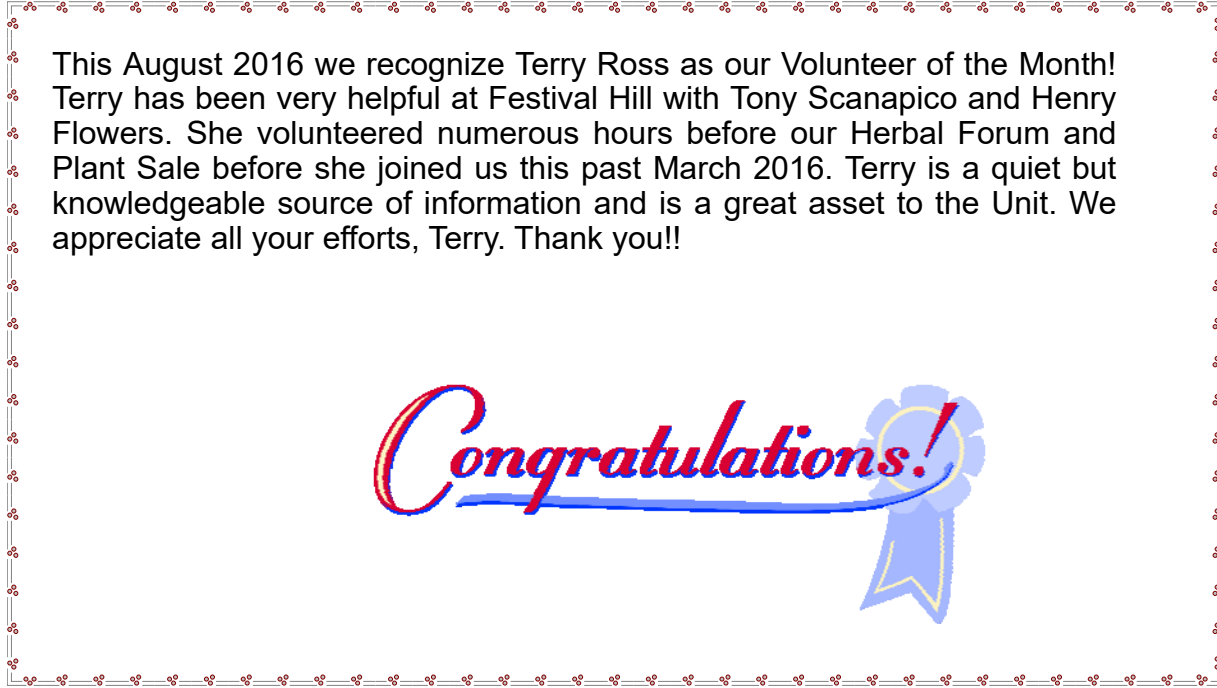
August 6 — Kay Von Minden

August 13 — Johanna Hoiseth

August 16 — Catherine Hall

August 23 — Pamela Murski

August 25 — Carolyn Hayes



This August 2016 we recognize Terry Ross as our Volunteer of the Month! Terry has been very helpful at Festival Hill with Tony Scanapico and Henry Flowers. She volunteered numerous hours before our Herbal Forum and Plant Sale before she joined us this past March 2016. Terry is a quiet but knowledgeable source of information and is a great asset to the Unit. We appreciate all your efforts, Terry. Thank you!!

Congratulations!



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

Kay Scanapico July 2016

Botanical Name/Etymology: *Smallanthus sonchifolius*

Family Name: Asteraceae

Common Name: **Yacon** (yah-cohn), Peruvian ground apple (possibly from French name of potato, *pomme de terre*, (ground apple), yacon is a Spanish derivation of the Quechuan word, Ilaqon. Commonly called jicama in Ecuador (but what we know as jicama is a separate plant).



Origin: Northern and Central Andes, from Colombia to northern Argentina.

Growth Habit: Yacon plants can grow to over two meters in height and produce small, inconspicuous yellow flowers at the end of the growing season. The plant produces a perennial rhizome to which are attached the edible succulent storage roots.

Like its cousins, dahlias and Jerusalem artichokes, it develops huge tubers which are watery. The flesh is generally tan, but in its native habitat may be yellow, pink, lavender, red or orange.

The name *yacon* is the Quechuan word for watery or water root.

Growth, Cultural Requirements: Yacon has been cultivated throughout the Andes for more than a millennium, but only in recent years has it been grown in many other parts of the world. While traditionally grown by farmers at mid-elevations on the slopes of the Andes descending toward the Amazon, recent trials have shown that yacon can be grown in various sub-tropical climates as well.

Yacon can easily be grown in climates with only gentle frosts. Tubers with growing points can be planted in a well-dug bed in early spring. While aerial parts are damaged by frost, the tubers are not unless they freeze solid. After the first few autumn frosts, the tubers are ready for digging. Some may be left in the ground to grow the next year or they can be stored in the refrigerator (or cool storage area) until time to plant in the spring. Plant in a well-dug bed to which fertilizer has been added.

Dry and cold seasons cause the plant to die back, but the plant resprouts from the rhizome under favorable conditions.

Propagation: by rhizomes

Folklore and History: In colonial times, yacon consumption was identified with a Catholic religious celebration held at the time of an earlier Inca feast. Effigies of edible food may have been placed at burials or used as an offering to the gods. Incas depicted such yacon on their ceramics, and yacon was found in ancient burial sites.

Chemistry: The tubers contain fructooligosaccharides, an indigestible polysaccharide made up of fructose. Fructooligosaccharides taste sweet but pass through the human digestive tract unmetabolized, hence have very little caloric value. They also have a prebiotic effect, meaning they are used by beneficial bacteria that enhance colon health and aid digestion. Recent research has

Continued on next page

found that tubers and leaves are a good source of antioxidants. The leaves contain quantities of protocatechuic, chlorogenic, caffeic, and ferulic acids which give tisanes made from the leaves prebiotic and antioxidant properties.

Plant Part Used: The tubers, and to a lesser extent the leaves.

Time of Harvest: After the first few frosts or toward the end of the growing season in the tropics. The tubers taste much sweeter after they have matured.

Dosage Level: A weight loss program using yacon syrup recommended one to two teaspoons about an hour prior to each meal.

GRAS? (generally regarded as safe): Yes. Taking too much can have side effects similar to those you get by eating more soluble fiber than you are used to—flatulence, diarrhea, nausea and digestive discomfort.

Culinary Uses: The crisp, sweet tasting tubers are similar in texture and flavor to jicama except that yacon has some slightly sweet, resinous and floral overtones. It can be eaten fresh, often with a little sugar or honey and a little bit of lemon juice sprinkled over. Yacon recipes often contain citrus, because the acidity prevents discoloration. In South America it is put in a fruit salad called salpicon because the tubers add a crunchy texture to the mix. Yacon also can be stir-fried, roasted, or made into pies and healthy chips. Yacon syrups or powders can also be used as low-calorie sweeteners.

The huge leaves are used to wrap food for cooking.

Medicinal Uses: A tea made from the leaves offers antioxidants and helps lower blood sugar. Yacon root is also used as an aid to digestion, for constipation and weight loss.

Sources: Tubers with eyes can be bought from a number of internet sources including amazon.com, nicholasgardennursery.com, davesgarden.com

Bibliography:

Edible 2008 Washington, DC: National Geographic Society

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/yacon>

www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening-yacon-root-amaz06

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.



Herb of August - Lemongrass

Lemongrass is one of the few grasses that is very useful for herbal pursuits. We, being humans, are not ruminants and therefore don't have the ability to digest fibrous grasses. Yet we can use this wonderful grass to flavor beverages, soups, and other dishes if we do so in the proper way.

The botanical name of lemongrass (spelled all as one word) is *Cymbopogon citratus*, and it is believed to be native to southern India and Sri Lanka. Even though being native to that region, it is more associated with the multiple cuisines of Southeast Asia—especially those of Thailand and Vietnam. *Cymbopogon* is from the Greek *kymbe* for boat and *pogon* for beard, referring to the appearance of the flower spikes (believe me, they aren't much to see).

This grass is densely tufted and for us is a tender perennial—root hardy in most winters. Its leaves are fairly broad for a grass and have a coarse texture with a serrated edge. In a good wind the leaves will often rustle around and make sounds, especially after they have frozen and turned brown in the winter. When handling the leaves, be sure to either be very careful or wear gloves and a long sleeved shirt as the serrated edges can cut skin. The best way to propagate this grass is to remove mature stalks from the clump along with some roots and pot them up or plant in a new location—this is best done in late spring or summer. It can also be propagated by seed, but this will take longer to get a mature plant.

Because of its tropical origins, this plant loves warm growing conditions and lots of moisture, but will not stand to be in a soil that is constantly very wet. It will grow in a large pot, but due to its size (about 3-4 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide), it is advisable to find a spot in the ground where it can grow and not be confined. Growing it in the ground also makes it easier to protect the roots in winter because a pot outdoors will leave the roots more exposed to cold temperatures. This plant is hard for those with a witchy pruning hand in winter. When it does freeze back, please resist the urge to cut it back. It may be brown and depressing to look at, but the dead foliage is protecting the crown of the plant where new growth will emerge in the spring. If you cut it back before hard freezes, the crown will lack the insulation of those leaves and may freeze and lead to the plant's demise. Remember that this is a fairly marginal plant in terms of hardiness, even here in the warm coastal regions of Texas.

There are two ways in which to use lemongrass for culinary pursuits. The easiest is to take fresh green leaves and carefully crush them and add them to warm liquids for infusion. You can do this with hot water to make an herbal lemongrass tisane (aka: herbal tea), add it to steeping green or black tea to make a flavored hot or iced tea, or add it to soups (especially a light chicken or vegetable soup) at the end of the cooking process. Just remember, as with bay leaves, to remove the leaves after steeping and before serving, as they should not be eaten. If you are ever at a Southeast Asian restaurant and have a soup with lemongrass leaves in it, do take them out before eating. In the summer I love to add crushed herbs such as mint or lemon verbena to the bottom of a pitcher or glass of iced water. They infuse quite readily. You can do the same with lemongrass, but it takes a bit longer to yield up its essential flavors than the other two herbs.

The second way to use lemongrass is to cut out mature stalks from the plant and strip away the outer sheaths of the green portions of leaves in order to expose the tender white heart of the stalks. This tender material can be chopped up finely or pounded to a paste and added to dishes such as fish, poultry, seafood curries and stews. It will add flavor and because it can't be digested easily, it will add some fiber. Another interesting way in which to use stalks of lemongrass is to make them into skewers for seafood or poultry satays or use them as stirrers for herbal teas or exotic cocktails. Some who have extra energy or who need to blow off some steam will take the tough stalks and smash them with a hammer or mallet and infuse the results to make tea or to flavor vinegars.

The oil of lemongrass is commonly used to scent soaps and perfumes and exhibits antimicrobial, antioxidant, anticarcinogenic and antiradical action. Most lemongrass oil is produced in Guatemala and India.

Cymbopogon citratus is sometimes called West Indian lemongrass to differentiate it from *C. flexuosus*, which is commonly called East Indian lemongrass and which is easier to grow from seed and not as aromatic or flavorful. *C. martinii* is another relative prized for its essential oil. It is commonly called palmarosa or geranium grass and it is used in perfumery and as an insect repellent. *C. nardus* provides a familiar insect repelling oil - citronella.

Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit Garden Chair



OCTOBER DISTRICT GATHERING

Gatherings are venues for information exchange between members and headquarters/board, for education, and for raising funds to support the delegate with her travel and expenses within the district. Please plan to attend. You will have a lot of fun as well as meet new people and get involved in The Herb Society of America.

This year Beaumont Botanical Gardens, Beaumont, Texas, is the featured destination for the 2016 South Central District Gathering. The 2016 Gathering will be held on October 28 and 29. We have a 20-guest rooms block for HSA at:

Holiday Inn Beaumont
3950 I-10 South,
Beaumont, Texas

Arrival: Friday, October 28, 2016; Departure: Sunday October 30, 2016. Hotel Rates: \$89.00 good for Friday night and Saturday night (Does not include applicable state and local taxes or hotel occupancy tax). Rates will be available 3 days prior and 3 days after the Event Dates. Individuals call in to make their own reservations at (409) 842-7808. Identify yourself as an HSA member attending the Gathering.

Reservations must be made no later than Wednesday, September 28, 2016. Guest check-in time is 4:00 p.m. and check-out time is 11:00 a.m. All guests arriving before 4:00 p.m. will be accommodated as rooms become available. Bags may be stored prior to check-in or after check-out for a charge of \$6 per bag. The hotel is self-parking.

We will start our get together at the Beaumont Botanical Gardens at 4:00 (or 5:00) Friday, October 28, with registration and a meet and greet reception hosted by the Southeast Texas Unit. The Gardens are located at 6088 Babe Zaharias Drive and are in Tyrrell Park.

Directions: from IH-10 on the west side of Beaumont, take the Walden Road Exit and go south on Walden Road. Come to a traffic signal at the intersection of Walden and Fannett Road (Highway 124) and continue straight. Street name changes to Tyrrell Park Road. Continue about 1 mile to Babe Zaharias Drive and turn left into the park entrance. The gardens will be on your left.



Breakfast Saturday morning will be on your own. The unit meeting will start at 8:00 in the Dallas Room of the hotel. We will have two speakers (one is Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit and the other one has not yet been confirmed at this time). We will leave for Shangri La Botanical Gardens & Nature Center at (hopefully) 11:00. There, we will have a boxed lunch and a choice of two tours from three possible tours: Outpost tour, Gardens tour, and the Stark Museum of Art.

Back to Beaumont with a Cajun dinner at the Holiday Inn Beaumont. We will finish up with a unit member speaking about their "sharing table," the silent auction, ways and means, and raffle.


*Remember to bring items for the silent auction, ways and means, and raffle. Also, we will have a "sharing table" – each unit shares one item that they make for sale. Include a handout for attendees to take. This is new this year and a way to share ideas with others.

More details and registration forms will follow in the next few weeks. Email Mary Doebbling if you have any suggestions or questions. Mary Doebbling, South Central District Delegate at ourthymegarden@yahoo.com

August 2016

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

September 2016

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
4	5	6 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	7	8	9	10
11	12 	13 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	14	15 FH Workday 8:30 to noon BSG	16	17
18	19	20 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	21	22 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	23	24
25	26	27 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	28	29 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	30	



PIONEER PATHS

Volume 23

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—Karen Cornwell

Vice Chair Programs—Phoebe Lake
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers

Treasurer—Lucy Nehrkorn

