



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

December 2016

Volume 24, Number 4

December 13
Long Nights Full
Moon

—
December 21
Winter Solstice

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: December 8, 2016
- Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting
- Location: Herzstein and Old Chapels
Festival Hill, Round Top
- Directions: Exit Highway 290 at Texas 237 (Round Top exit).
Travel south on 237 and turn right onto Jaster Road
and then left into the Festival Hill parking lot. Drive
past the concert hall to the chapels.
- Program: Christmas Herbs: Folklore and Crafts
- Speaker: Jacqui Highton
- Angel: Henry Flowers
- Hosts: Henry Flowers, Kay Robbins, Joyce Lane, and
Ronda Herzog
- Lunch: Menke House



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I woke up this morning with winter-like condensation on my door panes, a sure sign that colder weather is on its way. Yet the afternoon sunshine is wonderful, and I do enjoy the cooler weather. My garlic shoots are just peeking out all green and happy. My African blue basil has grown to bush-size and is a favorite for bees and butterflies as always. I love to encourage birds, bees, and butterflies as much as I can, but my thumb seems greenest with easy to grow herbs. Even so, sometimes an easy-to-grow plant can quickly turn into a nightmare. I have a wild poinsettia, given to me by a friend, that is now everywhere! Growing herbs is always such a wonderful challenge!

As we work on our family traditions this holiday season, please be sure to set aside some time to work on things for our Pioneer Unit Herbal Forum, which will be coming up soon after the New Year. This is my favorite time of the year to work on a project for Thyme Well Spent (either the shop or the garden). TWSS thrives with new ideas each year. If you have a favorite herb-themed craft that you are certain will sell, just make a few for a test run this March. Please coordinate new ideas with either Pat Cox or Jane Press, TWSS Co-Chairs. They are always pleased to have suggestions.

I look forward to seeing you at our December meeting. Lunch at Festival Hill is always a special holiday treat. This month begins the celebrations of faith, family, and hope for new beginnings as we visit with friends and family sharing holiday blessings and plans for the upcoming new year.

Best wishes for memorable holidays and a joyous new year!

Karen Cornwell
Unit Chair



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

All agreed that Linda Gay was an enthusiastic and wonderful speaker. Her topic of small flowering trees inspired me to purchase a new Bauhinia!

I do hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and are entering the holiday season with gladness.

Here is an idea you might consider to prolong the attitude of thanksgiving right into and through the upcoming advent season. Each day, stop in the midst of your busyness and be thankful for something. It could be anything, a good friend, an unexpected kindness, the bloom of a favorite flower, a new recipe, etc. The key is to stop first and then be thankful!

Our December speaker will be Jacqui Highton of the South Texas Unit. Always a popular speaker, Jacqui will usher in the holiday season with her talk Christmas Herbs; Folklore and Crafts. As someone lacking in crafting skills, I particularly look forward to her presentation!

Phoebe Lake

Did you know

A charming legend appropriate for the season: When Mary and Joseph and the young Jesus were fleeing to Egypt, they stopped to rest. Mary took off her cloak and draped it on the nearest bush. That bush was Rosemary and Mary's cloak was blue. Since then Rosemary has always had blooms of blue.



Remember: Our December 8th meal at Festival Hill is \$5.00 for active members and \$25 for associate members and guests. **The deadline to sign up and pay is December 2nd.**

Pam Traylor
pamtraylor@ymail.com

MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
November 10, 2016

Karen Cornwell, Chair, welcomed members to the November meeting.

Phoebe Lake, Vice Chair Programs, introduced Horticulturalist Linda Gay who presented a slide program on small flowering ornamental trees. Each member received a discount coupon from Discount Trees of Brenham. Discount Trees also provided door prizes which were won by Karen Cornwell and Linda Rowlett.

Pam Traylor reminded members to sign up for next month's Christmas lunch at Festival Hill. The deadline is December 2, and the cost is \$5.00 for full members and \$25.00 for affiliate members. Pam thanked Euphanel Goad for providing her beautiful Round Top Retreat for Thanksgiving lunch and lunch hostesses Carla Lessard, Ann Allen, Jane Press, Mary Sockwell, Louise Rice, Kay Scanapico, Georgetta Welch, Johanna Hoiseth, and Carolyn Hayes for all their hard work.

Visitors were Kathe Forrest (guest of Susan Yancey), Joyce Caddell (guest of Wanda Hubbard), Joanie Havlick (guest of Pat Cox), and Pat Hoffmaster (daughter of Catherine Gardiner).

Karen Cornwell said the District Gathering was a great success, with ten Pioneer Unit members attending.

Pat Cox welcomed Jane Press as new co-chair of Thyme Well Spent Shoppe after Louise Rice stepped down due to the sudden death of her husband.

Henry Flowers announced a hypertufa workshop will take place on November 30.

Susan Bame thanked those who helped out at the Sensory Garden with the kindergarten tours. 125 children visited the garden.

Phoebe reminded members that next month's speaker will be Jacqui Highton of the South Texas Unit who will speak on Christmas Herbs: Folklore and Crafts.

The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Our November 2016 meeting at the Round Top Retreat, hosted by Euphanel Goad, enjoyed a great attendance and presentation. Two of our prospective new members, Kathe Forrest and Joyce Caddell, friends of Susan Yancey and Wanda Hubbard, joined us for their second and fourth visits. We're looking forward to their new memberships. Also Joanie Havlick, Pat Cox's friend, was with us, and Catherine Gardiner had her daughter Pat Hoffmaster with her. We're always happy to welcome them.

Our yearbooks were available at the meeting and will be at the December meeting for anyone who has not received theirs. Hours are being reported diligently, and we'll try to have a mid-year summary of same by the end of December. Membership is a little behind on account of my accident at the November meeting, but I am anxiously looking forward to catching up quickly as I can type better with my fractured wrist healing. And with this I would like to thank the entire membership body for all the help they gave me and my husband Bob before having to leave the meeting early to go to the Emergency Room in Brenham. All of your thoughts, assistance and prayers are truly appreciated; thank you to all. We have a wonderful unified group that Bob and I are happy to be part of.

As always, if you have any questions about Membership, please email me at gzsowers@att.net or call [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228) so I may help. Other of our members can be a great help too.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you at Menke House in Round Top on December 8th!

Happy Holidays!

Georgia Sowers

****VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH****

This December 2016 we recognize Carolyn Thomas as our Volunteer of the Month! Carolyn is a long-time member who has served on the Board in several capacities, headed up committees in Forum preparation and planning, as well as lining up workshops for everyone to participate in. She puts in numerous hours on Thursdays at the Festival Hill Gardens and also is involved in the Botany Group. We appreciate all of your efforts past and present, Carolyn. Thank you for all you do to help!

OCTOBER 9, 2016, PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING Held at Festival Hill

Present: Karen Cornwell, Phoebe Lake, Lucy Nehrkorn, Henry Flowers, Susan Bame, Lynn Ehler, and Pat Cox.

Programs: Phoebe Lake, Vice Chair Programs, has been researching prospective speakers for next year.

Membership: Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Membership, reported three new members – Bonnie Lout, Janie Cornelius, and Belinda Weatherly.

Treasurer: Lucy Nehrkorn, Treasurer, distributed copies of the Quarterly Income Statement and Budget Summary Report for Three Months Ending September 30, 2016. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

Standing Committee Reports

- A. *Archives and Rosemary* – Lynn Ehler said Archives and card supply are in good shape.
- B. *Education/Special Events* – Henry and Barbara Hemmer will send out a notice about an upcoming hypertufa workshop.
- C. *Scholarship:* Phoebe Lake has applied for a Unit scholarship.
- D. *Gardens* - Henry has new members volunteering in the Festival Hill Gardens. It will soon be time to move the plants to the greenhouse. Susan Bame reported that the Sensory Garden at Brenham ISD has been planted and the color wheel is back. Kindergartners will tour the garden on October 24th.
- E. *Plant Sale/Gazebo* - Karen is focusing on improving the credit card sale system for Forum 2017.
- F. *Thyme Well Spent Shoppe* – Louise Rice has officially stepped down from co-chairing TWSS due to the sudden death of her husband. It was decided that the Unit will plant a tree in memory of Ed Rice.

Past Chair

Henry and Sara Holland will present a proposal to the Board of HSA in January that an education award be created in memory of Madalene Hill to be funded by the South Central District.

Old Business

Orientation: Karen suggested that after the January meeting, Board members and Committee Chairs take a section of the Yearbook to interpret and explain to new members for Orientation.

Phoebe Lake volunteered to present a short program at the February meeting giving tips on marketing and dealing with the public for Forum 2017.

Unit job descriptions are now on the website.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary



THYME WILL SPENT SHOPPE

Please look around your gardens to see if there are any plant materials, especially flowers, that would be good for drying for sale in bunches or for use in decorating wreaths or small bouquets to sell in the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe at Forum 2017. If you find some, please dry the materials and bring them to Henry at any upcoming meetings.

Some items that may be good for drying are flowers such as celosia or globe amaranth, interesting seed pods, or even flower petals that could be used in potpourri (of which we plan to make a few decorative items).

Pat Cox
Thyme Well Spent Co-Chair

CULINARY INTEREST GROUP

We will NOT meet in December. The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 4, at Menke House from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Because we are all experimenting with different recipes for vinegars, bring one dish using one of the vinegars. Remember to bring the recipe(s) too to pass on to the Thyme Well Spent Herb Shop. I'll collect them and give to our co-chairs.

Be thinking about what you would like to learn about next with respect to herbs and cooking. Maybe herbal soups???

Sara Holland

HERBAL MUSTARD WORKSHOP

Scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, at Menke House from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Limited to 8 participants.
Please email me by January 4th if you are interested or have any questions.

Sara Holland
herblady@austin.rr.com
512.648.0088

Member Scholarship Awards

Two Pioneer Unit members are being awarded scholarships of \$125.00 each for the 2016-2017 year.

The first award is going to Phoebe Lake for books and preparation for a study on salvias including history, world distribution, varieties, folklore, uses and best local varieties.

The second award is going to Henry Flowers for study and preparation for a program on Botany to be given to the Pioneer Unit in 2017.

Kay Robbins

Congratulations Kay Scanapico!

Kay Scanapico was nominated for a Certificate of Appreciation from the Herb Society of America, and I am proud to say that she was selected by HSA's Awards Committee to receive one of these awards at the upcoming Annual Meeting and Educational Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, next May.

Please make sure to congratulate Kay the next time you see her. It is wonderful to see a member of the Pioneer Unit receive an award and the accompanying recognition. Kay has done a lot to benefit the Pioneer Unit in the many years that she has been a member and has put together some very educational and memorable programs to educate us and the community around us.

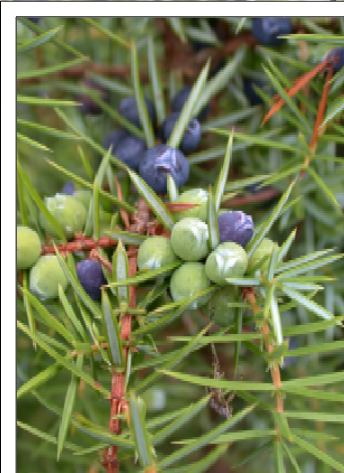
I hope that many of you will consider going to Arkansas next May as this meeting will be relatively close, and it is sure to be very educational and fun. Having many of our members there to see Kay receive her award and to cheer her on would be superb!

Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit Garden Chair

Herb of December – Juniper

I have to admit that I didn't know much about juniper before writing this article. I do know quite a bit about the genus *Juniperus* and many of its species, but not the plant that is commonly used as an herb.

The plant in question is *Juniperus communis*—the "common juniper" native to northern temperate regions. It is a shrubby tree that is a member of the family Cupressaceae (cypress family). It is evergreen, many branched, and has prickly awl-like leaves. Like our native red cedar (*J. virginiana*) and Ashe juniper (*J. ashei*), the common juniper is dioecious—meaning that it has separate male and female plants. The male plants bear lots of yellow pollen in winter (as do our native junipers—the cause of what is known as "cedar fever" allergies) and the females bear a cone (all members of this family are cone-bearing and do not have true flowers and fruits), which is small, round and fleshy and looks like a tiny blueberry (again, just like our native junipers).



The common juniper does grow naturally in northern regions (north of Texas that is) of North America. In the east it may obtain tree status, but in the west it tends to grow quite low and is much more shrubby in habit.

It is the mature berries (again, truly cones but it is easier to refer to them as berries because I am sure that you are probably like me and envision a pine cone when you see the word cone) of this plant which are highly prized. They mature in the fall and can be harvested and used fresh or dried. Traditionally they have been used to flavor gin, other liqueurs, beef and poultry dishes, pâtés, pickles, and game meats such as venison and wild boar. The Germans like to use them in sauerkraut and also use them in a conserve called *Latwerge*, which is usually eaten with cold meats.

If you bite into a juniper berry it is quite aromatic and bitter. The taste is commonly compared to turpentine and thus a little goes a long way. Amazingly it is complementary with other herbs such as rosemary, fennel, parsley, marjoram, bay, garlic and more. It also complements many other alcohols such as port, brandy and wine. The berries from different regions can vary in strength—those from the Mediterranean tend to be stronger than those of more northerly England.

Medicinally the berries of common juniper are diuretic. They stimulate the kidneys and thus should not be consumed if one has kidney issues. The essential oil of juniper was once used for medicinal purposes, but modern practices recommend that it no longer be used in that way. It is still sometimes used to give spicy and deep base notes to perfumes.

If you want to grow common juniper, you need to plant it in full sun with good drainage. Once established, it is considered to be drought tolerant. I personally have killed 2-3 plants, but perhaps I've tried the wrong variety and shouldn't give up yet.

If you would ever want to propagate this plant, you root cuttings in the winter in a cold frame or cool greenhouse or simply sow the berries outside where mother nature will stratify them over the winter and induce them to germinate in the spring. This is true of our native junipers as well, but because they are so prolific in nature, "why bother?" I ask.

Wildlife of a great variety consume the berries of all junipers. According to a variety of sources, the berries of our native red cedar (*J. virginiana*) are also edible, but please note that there are juniper out there which have toxic berries, so be sure to know what you are harvesting if you do so. Because the berries of the junipers I've mentioned are so potent in their taste and because they can have strong diuretic effects, it is best to consume them, like all things, in moderation.

For decorative purposes juniper branches make great sways, wreaths and filler for wintery bouquets—possibly along with yaupon branches in berry and some pine. After you've collected and decorated your home for Christmas sit back and have a gin and tonic and know that you are enjoying the juniper in multiple ways!

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.

Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit Garden Chairman

Botany Study Group Takes a Nature Hike

Instead of our normal meeting with plant reports, the Botany Study Group decided to take a nature hike on the Festival Hill campus in November. After working in the pharmacy garden for an hour, we set off into the woods and pasture following Mary Reeves. It was very nice for a change to get out and see what Mother Nature has in store for us in our local area.



There were eight members of the group who were able to attend, and we ended up meandering around the campus for about two hours and covered about 1.5 miles. A lot of you may not know that the Festival Hill campus has a lot of trails which go all around the 200+ acre campus. Some of these trails are utilized every October by our local school for cross country meets, but anyone can feel free to check them out at any time. Some go into highly wooded areas while others cut across occasionally mown fields. If you are really adventurous, you can set out to find statues of St. Joseph or Buddha tucked away at different locations on the trails. We passed by Buddha and while there found a wonderful surprise.

In starting out on our trek we crossed the Roman bridge and passed by the "island" with the temple of Diana (sadly in need of repair as a tree limb fell and knocked most of it over—but Diana is still standing upright). Near the island we noted an orange tree growing wild. Nobody knows who planted it. Quite possibly Mother Nature did so herself. There were a few fruit (not yet ripe) way up in the tree. I've got to make a note to myself to go back and check it in a couple of weeks as we had some fruit from it a few years ago and they were the best oranges I have ever eaten.

A side path led us past water and red oaks, and we stopped to observe a bois d'arc (*Maclura pomifera*) tree with its myriad thorns and gangly growth habit. We also noted poison ivy along the way and saw that it can grow up into trees and hang down at face level—everyone should learn to identify this plant as it is prolific and an unpleasant pest. We noted that many who have poison ivy reactions tend to get them more commonly in the winter when the leaves have dropped, yet the sap can still cause a reaction.

Pretty soon we came to a large stand of golden bamboo. We believe this was first planted by a neighbor and now it is highly invasive. If you want to be a good neighbor, don't plant bamboo along your fence line. In fact, I don't recommend that you plant any but clumping bamboos anywhere, as the spreaders, especially this one, can be a headache well beyond your lifetime. If you ever need some bamboo for fishing poles, garden trellising or any other project, you are welcome to come and harvest as much as you would like. Believe me that you could haul away many a truck load and not make much of a dent!





After leaving the bamboo grove, we crossed the Philosopher's bridge and noted the duck weed, one of the smallest true plants in the world, growing all over the surface of Boggy Creek. On the far bank is a large and elegant American elm (thankfully we haven't been hit here with Dutch elm disease). A short walk through an area of much yaupon and towering oaks led us to the meditation garden, where we admired the statue of Buddha and noted a blooming saffron crocus (pictured here). This purple flowered crocus is a fall bloomer and produces the valuable stigmas which are harvested and dried to produce the highly valuable spice we know as saffron. What a treat this was to see!

After saying farewell to Buddha, we passed along side the Log House and admired (or didn't in the case of some who thought it ugly) masses of ball moss growing on the oak trees. Ball moss is a cousin of Spanish moss and is an epiphytic bromeliad, so it can do no harm to a tree other than if it is so prolific it may weigh down branches.



After passing across Jaster Road we, crossed a field and noted the nasty Macartney rose (*Rosa bracteata*) which was brought in by ranchers as fencing material, but which has escaped and now is a notable pest across Texas. In the field we found pods of a vining milkweed bursting open to let fly their fluffy seeds. A few of us (myself included) gave Mother Nature a hand with this task.

A short venture back into the woods led us past a nice crop of mistletoe (a true parasite) growing in a hackberry, and then we were soon at the Artist Residences where we stopped to smell the leaves of an aromatic sumac which was likely bird-planted. On our way back toward the concert hall, we stopped to admire a western soapberry (*Sapindus drummondii*) in full golden berry and then passed a stand of native persimmons (*Diospyros virginiana*) that still had some fruits dangling from their branches.



After passing the concert hall, we passed through the poet's grove and stopped to admire the bark of a cork oak (*Quercus suber*) and a young dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostoboides*). In passing around Clayton House, we saw a variety of maples starting to turn color and admired a mature Mexican buckeye (*Ungnadia speciosa*) near the pool enclosure. On the far side of Clayton House, we goggled over the fascinating trunk of a Japanese crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia faurei*), possibly my favorite tree on the campus. With the lunch siren blowing in Round Top, our hike was at an end. I hope we'll have a chance to do another hike in the spring. I urge you to get out when it is nice this winter and take a look to see what interesting things you can find.

Henry Flowers
Pioneer Unit Botany Study Group

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 Fayetteville Electric Cooperative magazine.

Louise Rice





December Birthdays

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




December 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 Deadline to sign up and pay for dinner at Menke House	3
4	5	6 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	7	8 Pioneer Unit Meeting	9	10
11	12	13 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	14	15 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 Deadline for Newsletter submissions	29 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	30	31 

January 2017



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





PIONEER PATHS

Volume 24

Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

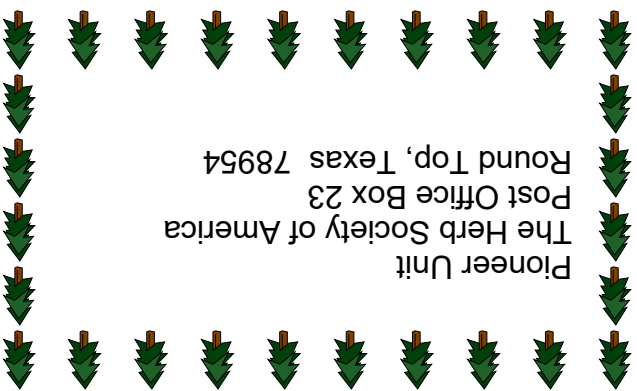
Pioneer Paths is a publication of The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$10.00 per year.

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 Cornwall

Vice Chair Programs—Phoebe Lake
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers
Treasurer—Lucy Nehr Korn



Pioneer Unit
The Herb Society of America
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