



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

January 2017

Volume 24 Number 5

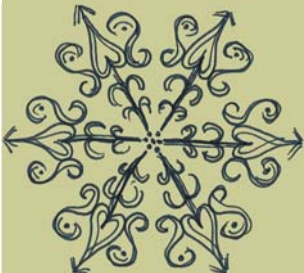
January 1
New Year's Day

January 5
Twelfth Night

January 12
Wolf Full Moon



January 25
Board Meeting
Menke House Parlor
Festival Hill
(9:00 a.m.)



MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: January 12, 2017
- Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Program followed by Meeting
- Location: Brenham Presbyterian Church
900 South Jackson Street, Brenham, Texas
- Directions: From Highway 290 in Brenham, take Business 36 north, turn west on College Avenue, and then south on Jackson Street.
- Program: Cooking with Herbs for Savory and Sweet
- Speaker: Molly Fowler, the Dining Diva
- Angel: Mary Doebbeling
- Hosts: Susan Lake, Candi Glancy, Lucy Nehrkorn, Betty Pior, and Linda Rowlett
- Lunch: Herbal Delights
- After: New Member Orientation



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the New Year! I hope you all had wonderful holidays with family and friends and that you are looking forward to new beginnings and challenges for 2017! We have been having some crazy end-of-the-year weather but it appears that winter is finally here for awhile. I myself am always ready for spring after about two weeks of cold weather.

I am looking forward to our January program with the "Dining Diva." It should be great! Following the program, we will have a short (15-20 minutes) new member orientation. Of course, we welcome anyone who wants to sit in. We will be experimenting with a new/old format, so please join us.

In the meantime, it is time to start planning for the 2017 Herbal Forum, March 17-18. January is the month for collecting all your seeds and dried herbs, planning workshops for creating wonderful Thyme Well Spent (TWSS) goodies to be sold, starting to document volunteer preferences, beginning Forum publicity, and other planning processes for yet another successful event. Anyone interested in learning how to make herbal mustards, please contact Barbara Hemmer at hemmtbh@yahoo.com or Sara Holland at herblady@austin.rr.com There is some flexibility, as all workshop dates have not been set.

We will be having a special (short) overview of the Plant Sale at our February meeting. Our March meeting is more focused on finalizing TWSS projects and grounds cleanup prior to Forum. Also, credit cards are a popular method of payment during the sale, and we hope more members will be willing to be trained as backup. More information will be available later as we get closer to March. Contact Karen Cornwell at karencornwell@rocketmail.com or Linda Rowlett at lrowlett@gmail.com if you might be interested in learning about the "Square."

Also, stay tuned! The HSA website does not have much detail about the Educational Conference other than Little Rock Marriott, May 3-7, 2017. The hotel is downtown, close to the river, and there are 10 listed go-to tourist sites within less than ½ mile from the conference. Please consider joining us: it should be a great time!

A fond farewell to our fragile basil, but a wish for continued health to our hardy rosemarys, and the best to you and yours in this new year, 2017!

Karen Cornwell
Unit Chair



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

Don't know about you, but our house is a little too quiet now that all the kids have gone home.

Two consolations, though. The first is time to begin reading the lovely books I received (mostly about bread baking) and secondly time to work in the garden. Many plants took quite a beating in our sudden cold snap, so I love to get out and cut things back.*

It seems a long time ago that Jacqui Highton spoke to us about Christmas herbs. The setting in the Old Chapel at Festival Hill was just perfect, and we all enjoyed a delicious lunch afterwards at the Menke House.

And now, suddenly, it's a New Year and time to be looking ahead! Our program for January 12 will be "Cooking with Herbs for Savory and Sweet" presented by Molly Fowler. Molly, also known as The Dining Diva, is a traveling culinary instructor, television personality, recipe developer, product spokesperson, and cookbook author who demonstrates entertaining with ease, flair and impact. Author of Menus for Entertaining, Molly hosted her own 30-minute television cooking show, All the Right Ingredients, airing on Houston's KHOU/CBS Channel 11 for three years.

"Molly's skill, humor, and food artistry come together in presentations that provide a delicious serving of information and entertainment."

For a sneak preview, visit www.TheDiningDiva.com.

See you then!
Phoebe Lake

****Did you know***

It's not actually a good idea to trim plants back this time of year as I tend to do. Better to wait a bit longer until all threat of really cold weather has passed. If you cut back too hard and too early and the weather warms up, plants will send up tender new shoots that get hit really hard by a late frost. Do what I say, not what I do!



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
DECEMBER 8, 2016

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

Phoebe Lake, Vice Chair Programs, introduced Jacqui Highton of the South Texas Unit who presented a fascinating program about the folklore and traditions of Christmas Herbs, particularly mistletoe, holly and ivy.

Karen announced that a short orientation would be held after the January meeting for new members and anyone else who wants to attend. The orientation information will be based on the Yearbook and there will be a handout summarizing the contents.

Karen encouraged members to sign up for the Amazon Smile program which donates a percentage of each order placed with Amazon to a designated beneficiary. Herb Society of America could be named as that beneficiary.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Membership, welcomed visitors Jeanne Powers (guest of Terry Ross), Kathie Forrest (guest of Linda Rowlett) who was on her third visit, and new member Joyce Caddell. Karen said that Joyce's membership would be ratified at the next Board meeting in January.

Henry Flowers thanked Susan Wood for bringing in seeds for members to take home. He asked everyone to be on the lookout for items for the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe for Forum 2017 next March, including magazines and books for the scholarship table.

Henry asked everyone to sign a card for Verena Aeschbacher who has had surgery.

Pam Traylor, Hospitality, thanked the host team, including head host Henry Flowers, Ronda Herzog and Joyce Lane. Door prizes were won by Lynn Ehler, Lori Yeats, Kay von Minden, Mary Ann Hillegeist, Jean Zavoda, and Terry Ross.

Karen reported that 16 members attended the hypertufa workshop last week, and she thanked Barbara Hemmer and her helpers for organizing the workshop for such a large crowd.

Karen announced that Kay Scanapico has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the Herb Society of America.

Next month's meeting will be at Brenham Presbyterian Church, and the speaker is Molly Fowler who will present a program entitled "Cooking with Herbs for Savory and Sweet."

The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox
Secretary



MEMBER INFORMATION

Another year gone so quickly: where did the months go?! I trust all of you enjoyed a blessed and Merry Christmas and wish you all the best for New Year 2017! Our December program presented by affiliate member Jacqui Highton was most well-received. Visitors were Kathe Forrest with Linda Rowlett for her third visit, and first-time visitor Jeanne Powers came with our member Terry Ross. Patricia Hoffmaster was with her mother Catherine Gardiner, and Pat Cox's friend Joanie Havlick was there with us too. Our newest member, Joyce Caddell, referred to us by our member Wanda Hubbard, was also in attendance. Welcome to all of you. We look forward to seeing you again!

Active member Henry Flowers has a new address at 709 Scott Drive, Brenham Texas 77833-4980; and active member Dr. Lois Sutton also has moved. Her new address is 638 Upper Grassy Branch Ext, Asheville, North Carolina 28805-9292, and new email is doctorlonc@gmail.com. Cell phone [281-409-6498](tel:281-409-6498) remains the same. We plan to correct these in the online version of our member directory, and they will be in next print of the yearbook come 2017. Please correct your yearbooks accordingly.

Please remember, all new and prospective members, that we will have a brief but concise orientation about the workings of our Unit after the meeting on January 12, 2017, and this will be open to all members who are interested to learn more about the Unit. I am looking forward to communicating with all interested, as well as learning myself. Wishing all of you a Blessed and Happy New Year, I look forward to seeing you at Brenham Presbyterian Church this month!

Georgia Sowers
Membership Chair

NEW ACTIVE MEMBER!

Our newest member, effective December 2016, is Joyce Caddell, who was introduced to our Unit by active member Wanda Hubbard. Joyce is a retired teacher/librarian who has been living in La Grange for the last 5 plus years and is involved in various volunteer activities, i.e., St Mark's Medical Center Auxiliary, Monument Hill Kreische Brewery State Park, Bluebonnet Master Gardeners, and Delta Kappa Gamma. She has three children, ten grandchildren, and four great-grands! Joyce lives at 31 W Bluff View, La Grange Texas 78945, cell phone is [979-702-1036](tel:979-702-1036), and email is joycad@cvctx.com. Her birthday is 28 October, and contact information will be in the next print of our yearbook 2017. We will include her information in our online yearbook, and you may update your current copies accordingly. Joyce has a great interest in learning about herbs and has been participating in activities already. Let's make her feel completely at home with us. Welcome, Joyce!

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

Botanical Name/Etymology: *Commiphora myrrha*

(Between 180-200 species of Myrrh exist.

Commercial varieties are named after their source)

C. guidotti-Somalian, or scented Myrrh

C. abyssinica-Arabian Myrrh

C. gileadensis-Mecca Myrrh also known as the Balm of Gilead

C. mukul-gugulon or Indian Myrrh



Family Name: *Burseraceae*

Common Name: Myrrh

Origin: Ancient origins from Northeastern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Specifically Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Oman, Yemen. Today myrrh can also be found as far east as India and Thailand. Used originally as incense, in religious rituals and as an embalming agent, today myrrh is still used in incense and perfumes.

Growth Habit: Small tree or large thorny shrub to about 10 feet. Leaves are toothed, with each having a large terminal leaf and two smaller leaflets. Pink and yellow flowers followed by small plum-like fruit.

Growth (Cultural) requirements: Prefers hot and dry conditions.

Propagation: From seeds in spring or hardwood cuttings at the end of the growing season. Seeds are slow to germinate and the plant is slow to grow. Use a well-drained soil mixture for succulents and water sparingly.

Folklore and History:

In Greek mythology Myrrha was the daughter of the king of Cyprus. She developed a lust for her own father (instilled by the Goddess Aphrodite). Her nursemaid, thinking she could cure Myrrha's feelings, devised a plan where Myrrha would sleep with her father. It went all wrong when her father woke up, discovered Myrrha in his bed, and tried to kill her. Horrified by what she had done, Myrrha asked the Gods to help her. They did by turning her into the myrrh tree, whose bark continues to ooze her tears.

Queen Hatshepsut, one of only two female Pharaohs, ruled for 22 years around 1500 BC. One of her accomplishments was establishing trade routes, notably to the Land of Punt (most likely Somalia). Her traders brought back many spices, including myrrh, but interestingly at her request (prompted by the God Amon) they also brought back 31 young myrrh trees (all purchased for an abysmally low amount from the locals). Perhaps the earliest botanical expedition!

"Mur" is an ancient Hebrew and Arabic word that means bitter. It is mentioned 17 times in the old and new testaments. Myrrh was bitter and a symbol of suffering as well as a very expensive embalming agent.

So when it was brought by the Magi to Jesus at his birth, was the value of it (higher than gold) symbolic of the value of Christ to the world? Or was it a bitter substance indicative of his future suffering? Myrrh was used to embalm his body after his death. So it was with Jesus from the beginning to the end of his earthly life.

Chemistry (if known-especially active essential oils): Oleo gum resin that is 60% arabinose, galactose, 4-O methylglucuronic acid and xylose.

Plant parts used: Resin, or "tears," which oozes from the bark. These dry into hard yellow/red pieces. They have a bitter taste but an aromatic odor. Once hardened, the tears are ground into a powder to be dissolved in water. Interestingly, wounding the stems produces an inferior resin.

Dosage Level: Leaf infusion/root decoction 4-6 ounces several times a day. Tincture 1-2 drops several times a day as a mouthwash. Or 5 milliliter/day in water for colds, fever etc. Capsules (200 milligrams 5 times a day) are sometimes taken instead as they're more palatable. Essential oils are used externally as a lotion or chest rub.

GRAS (generally regarded as safe): Yes, except for pregnant and nursing women.

Culinary Uses: None known.

Medicinal Uses: Used internally and externally for everything from dyspepsia, lung complaints, rheumatism, ear and throat infections. Externally for mouth ulcers, bed sores. Used as an ingredient in mouthwash because of its antiseptic properties.

Other Uses: Perfumes, incense, toothpaste

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.

Submitted by Phoebe Lake, December 2016



Herb of the Month of January - Coriander/Cilantro

By now I'm sure that most of you know that coriander and cilantro are the same plant, but yet are different in many ways. The botanical name of the plant is *Coriandrum sativum* and it is (for us) a cool season annual member of the carrot family (Apiaceae). What most people commonly call cilantro is the fresh aromatic leaves of the plant, and coriander nowadays is typically the dried seeds of the plant. Both have very different tastes and tend to be used in very different ways.

The leaves of this plant, most commonly called cilantro or Chinese parsley, are uniquely fragrant and tasteful. Some say the aroma is like that of a stinkbug, and to some extent I agree. But there is more depth than that. The foliage tastes very herbaceous and a bit resinous as well. It is very unique. I think that the foliage is best if not cooked or heated to any degree. With cooking it does lose its pungency and becomes more mellow—the reason why when it is used in warm soups it is much more mellow than in a fresh salsa.

Around the world cilantro is used in many cuisines. We, being close to Mexico, most often associate it with the cuisine of that country, where it is an indispensable flavoring in salsas and pico de gallo. It is also used to a great extent in the cuisines of many African countries, India, China, and southeast Asia. It is no a coincidence that these cuisines often utilize chile peppers as well, as they combine wonderfully with the taste of cilantro.

The most interesting tidbit of information about this plant, at least it is to me, is that it is native to the eastern Mediterranean. We don't seem to associate it with the cuisine of Greece or Lebanon. Yet in those countries coriander seed is utilized quite a bit. The seeds have a spicy (not hot) flavor with a floral/citrus overtone. If you don't use them in cooking and baking, you really should. When the seeds are still an immature green, they have a flavor between that of cilantro and coriander and are often utilized in that form in Southeast Asian cookery.

Coriander is a plant which is very easy to grow—as long as you plant it at the right time. It is a cool season plant, so now is the appropriate time to start sowing seeds in your garden. If you wait until March or April, it will be too late. As with many plants in the carrot family, warming spring temperatures will cause cilantro to bolt—send up stalks of small white flowers, which are borne in small umbels. The foliage will also become more finely cut at this point and will have a different aroma and flavor compared to that of the larger immature foliage at the base of the plant.

If allowed to reseed, coriander will come back on its own year after year.

Many varieties of cilantro exist in the modern seed market. Many, such as 'Slo-Bolt', have been selected for their longer resistance to bolting in the spring. Unfortunately all varieties will at some time go to flower and seed, and we are left without fresh cilantro to add to tomato-laden salsas in the summer. Thankfully cilantro has become a stable herb crop in the grocery store and is available year round and at very reasonable prices. It is also being produced organically for those you want to avoid any potential pesticides (although I would doubt it is a crop that is heavily sprayed, if it is sprayed at all).

Many members of the carrot family are great larval plants for butterflies—especially parsley, fennel and dill. Cilantro, on the other hand, seems to never be bothered by caterpillars—perhaps the stink bug-like aroma keeps them away. Occasionally I've found aphids on my cilantro, but they are easy to take care of and unless you are a strict vegan, eating a few won't hurt and can provide some additional protein in the diet.

Coriandrum sativum will be the herb celebrated on high this year, so I urge you to grow it in your garden this winter and use it often. Experiment with it, and if you come up with some interesting recipes, please let me know. I've been using coriander much more in my cooking and find it delightful in baked goods and anywhere where other spices such as ginger or cinnamon are utilized. In the spice blend I make for the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe it is the main spice of many.

Sow, enjoy and have a wonderful and herb-filled new year!

Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit Garden Chairman



MUSTARD WORKSHOP MUSTARD WORKSHOP

Learn how to make tasty herbal mustards and help us prepare them for the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe. They will be for sale at the Herbal Forum.

DATE: Tuesday, January 10

TIME: 10 - 12 noon

PLACE: Menke House at Festival Hill

Supplies and recipes provided. Bring a small jar for a tasting of mustard to take home with you.

Please contact Sara Holland at herblady@austin.rr.com if you plan to attend.

If you have a blender, we could use 2 more for the workshop. Make sure it is relatively new and has the power to crush those mustard seeds.

CULINARY INTEREST GROUP

DATE: Wednesday, January 4

TIME: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Menke House at Festival Hill

Bring your recipe using herb vinegars and a tasting of the dish.

Bring ideas for what you would like to study next, and we will get organized for 2017!

SEE YOU THEN!

Sara Holland

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

January 1 — Carolyn Thomas

January 7 — Mary Doebbeling

January 18 — Verena Aeschbacher

January 19 — Oscar Hillegeist

January 26 — Georgia Sowers

January 27 — Cindy Nash

January 28 — Euphanel Goad



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



February 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden		1 Culinary Group 11 to 1:00	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 BSG	17	18
19	20	21 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	22	23 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	24	25
26	27	28 FH Workday 8:30 to noon				





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

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