

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

January 2019

Volume 26, Number 5



January 1
New Year's Day

—
January 5
Twelfth Night

—
January 16
Board Meeting
Menke House Parlor
Festival Hill
(9:00 a.m.)

—
January 20
Wolf Full Moon



MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: January 10, 2019

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 (Day Street). Turn left off Day on to College Street and then go two blocks to Jackson Street. The church will be on your left.

Program: Best Flowers for Texas Winters

Speaker: Linda Gay

Angel: Dianne Singletary

Hosts: Peggy Richardson, Ronda Herzog, Joyce Lane, Patty Mills, Janie Plummer, and Karen Springer

Lunch: Winter Squash Delights

After: New Member Orientation



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings and 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 2019!

I am looking forward to our January program. I love to see flowers blooming in winter! Following our program, we will have a short (15-20 minutes) new member orientation. Of course, we welcome anyone who wants to sit in. This a yearly event and a good opportunity for new members to ask questions about the unit, its activities, and its Board.

We have been planning the 2019 Herbal Forum for many months now, but it is time to ramp it up! If you have visited our FaceBook page (<http://www.herbsocietypioneer.org/>), you will have read all about the plans for Forum. The Plant and Thyme Well Spent Shop sales are our one big budget event of the year, and it is always fun to participate in March and an excellent opportunity to get to know one another as a team.

Planning will continue more intensely as we move into spring. January is the month for collecting all your seeds and dried herbs, planning workshops for creating wonderful TWSS goodies to be sold, starting to document volunteer preferences, approving the budget for plant purchases, beginning Forum publicity, just to mention a few. At our February meeting, we will be having a special (short) overview of the Plant Sale. Our March meeting is more focused on finalizing TWSS projects and grounds cleanup prior to Forum. More information will be available later as we get closer to March.

We certainly miss having Henry Flowers always available at Festival Hill and as a central part of Forum oversight. Henry is still an active member and has been helping with our transition away from our previous dependence on his time. I am very grateful that he has been part of the Steering Committee that has been meeting monthly to work out Forum details. Special kudos to Kathe Forrest for pulling the program together. Our herb of the year for 2019 is tea, *camellia sinensis*. All members of this ad hoc committee have played an integral role in the transition from Festival Hill planning the Forum to the Pioneer Unit doing so.

At the national level, the 2019 Educational Conference and Annual Meeting of Members is Thursday, June 13th, through Saturday, June 15, 2019, in Madison, Wisconsin. There is more information at the HSA website: herbsociety.org. Please consider joining us; it should be a great time. In the meantime, see you in the new year!

Karen Cornwell
Unit Chair



Night-blooming cereus in January

FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

What flowers are blooming in your winter garden? As you see in the picture, my lavender has taken off. I have 4 or 5 different kinds. The ones here are facing west and are Spanish Eyes fern-leaf lavender.

My roses also have buds on them. I guess it's time to hear a talk about "Best Flowers for Texas Winters." Linda Gay, Horticulturist from the Houston area, has spoken to us before on ornamental trees and I believe was a guest speaker at an Herb Forum. For 25 years, she built the plant collection at the 325-acre Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens in Humble.

Time also to bring out those squash recipes and delight us all with your culinary expertise!

The meeting will be in Brenham at the Presbyterian Church. See you there.

Kathe Forrest
Programs Chair

"He who marvels at the beauty of the world in summer will find equal cause for wonder and admiration in winter.... In winter the stars seem to have rekindled their fires, the moon achieves a fuller triumph, and the heavens wear a look of a more exalted simplicity."
John Burroughs, 1866



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING PIONEER UNIT DECEMBER 13, 2018

Karen Cornwell, Chair, welcomed members, and Kathe Forrest, Vice Chair Programs, introduced speaker Nathan Hanath with a program on Hybrid Daylilies.

The January meeting will be at Brenham Presbyterian Church, and the subject will be The Best Flowers for Texas Winters by speaker Linda Gay. Kathe will be sending out an email to the group listing past programs and asking for recommendations for future ones.

Karen said the Forum Steering Committee is finalizing Forum 2019 presentations and the program will be available for members shortly. She announced a short orientation session after the January meeting for new members and anyone else who wants to attend.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Programs, welcomed visitors Jean Bachovner, with Beverly Elam; Elisa Smith, who has previously attended Forum; Myra Simmons, with Betty Pior; Patty Royal, with Pat Cox; Ann Lugg, with Linda Rowlett; Lynda Perryman, with Susan Yancey; and Debi Thomas, with Belinda Weatherly. Georgia also welcomed new member Linda Yochim.

Pat Garrett, Festival Hill Gardens Chair, reminded members that Festival Hill recognizes travel time to and from the gardens as well as working hours, although the Pioneer Unit does not include travel time as volunteer hours, and she reminded members to be sure to add travel time to the book that is kept in the Lettuce Lounge at FH. Georgia reminded members to send her their hours for working at Festival Hill and the Sensory Garden.

Sara Holland announced a meeting of the Culinary Group on January 2 when they will be decanting vinegars and making mustards at Menke House and a meeting of the Botany Study Group on January 17 at 9:00 a.m. in the Pharmacy Garden.

Joyce Caddell said that Unit scholarships have been awarded to Phoebe Lake and Sara Holland/Mary Doebling. Sara and Mary have attended cooking school in Oaxaca, Mexico, and will be presenting a program based on their experiences.

Lori Yeats thanked lunch hostesses Frances Pittman, Cheryl Easley, Tony Scanapico, Lynn and Alton Ehler, and particularly Betty Pior who stepped in as head hostess after the sudden death of Betty Powell. She also thanked speaker angel Sara Holland.

Mary Reeves has donated a book from the Culinary Group, of which Betty Powell was a member, to the Round Top Family Library in her memory, and will also be giving one to the La Grange Library. Mary was contacted by Carl Cunningham, who is writing a 50th anniversary book about Festival Hill, to ask for contact information for Gwen Barclay so he can interview her for the book, and Mary said that Gwen was doing well.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox
Secretary



Daffodils in January



CULINARY GROUP

The Culinary Group spent their November meeting collecting herbs and making the concoctions that are now aging into vinegar. Our December meeting was an opportunity to bring our favorite finger foods/appetizers with recipes to share with the group. We all came away with full tummies and new recipes to serve over the holidays.

Our January meeting will be January 2 at 11:00 at Menke House where we'll decant our vinegars and make mustards to be sold during Forum. Interested members are welcome to join our fun and games. Meetings are held monthly on the first Wednesday of the month at 11:00 in Menke House on the grounds of Festival Hill.

The Culinary Group purchased copies of the HSA publication The Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs to be placed in the Round Top and LaGrange libraries in memory of our late member Betty Powell.

Belinda Weatherly

BOTANY STUDY GROUP

On January 17 Botany Study Group will meet at 9 a.m. in the Pharmacy Garden to clean the beds. Bring gloves, clippers, and weeding implements of your choice.

The meeting in Menke parlor starts at 10 a.m. We will discuss how to approach a group report on coffee and assign areas of study and distribute books on the subject. Phoebe Lake will be giving a report on the African plant, *cryptolepis sanguinolenta* or Bitter Root, that is used to treat malaria.

For more information, please contact Carolyn Thomas at cthomas1138@aol.com or 979-251-8386.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

I hope everyone enjoyed a Merry Christmas 2018 and a safe and Happy New Year 2019! Our Unit enjoyed a great turnout of members and visitors at the December Christmas meeting and luncheon with Speaker Nathan Hanath from Magnolia Hill Gardens. First-time visitors were Jean Bachofner with Bev Elam and Elisa Smith who decided to come visit on her own (so happy to see and meet her!). Visiting for their second times were Patty Royal with Pat Cox and Myra Simmons with Betty Pior (Myra owns and operates The Mustard Seed Shop in La Grange). Third-time visitors were Ann Lugg with Linda Rowlett and Lynda Perryman with Susan Yancey. Debi Thomas visited for her fourth time with Belinda Weatherly. Happily all of these visitors are prospective active members and should be joining us in the next couple of months! Our newest active member Linda Yochim was presented with her membership badge at the December meeting. Please read her interesting bio; she definitely has a fulfilling life and will be an asset to the Unit! It was also good to see affiliate member Mary Sockwell visiting with her dear friend Euphanel Goad. We look forward to seeing all of you at our meeting this month!

For all of our new members, I encourage all of you to attend our January 10, 2019, meeting and try to stay for a while after the meeting for our annual Orientation. This is a most informative time for any questions to be discussed. The Orientation is also open to long-time members who may have questions and is quite interactive. I look forward to seeing all of you after the meeting January 10th. If you have any questions, please communicate with me.

Membership is collecting hours for mid-year from the members, and members are reporting regularly. Thank you. Only a few members have not picked up their new name badges, and a couple still need to pick up their new membership letters and name cards from HSA. They will be available at our meetings each month. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at gzsowers@att.net or call 979-836-8228 or Membership Co-Chair Terry Ross at terryr@cvctx.com or call 979-966-7133 so we can guide you in the right direction. I look forward to seeing all of you at our meeting January 10 at Brenham Presbyterian Church

Herbally New Year 2019!
Georgia Sowers



Rosemary in the snow in January 2011

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION NEW ACTIVE MEMBER

Our newest active member effective December 2018 is Linda Yochim, who lives at 2017 Coralberry Lane in Bellville, Texas 77418-3784 with her husband Tom. Her cell phone is 281-627-9090 and email is linda.yochim@gmail.com. Linda was introduced to our Unit by our active member and Treasurer Bev Elam. Her birthday is October 17. Linda's contact information will be in the next print of our yearbook and will be in our 2018-2019 online yearbook. You may update your current yearbooks accordingly. Her background and great interest in herbs and their many uses reflect that she will be a great asset to our Pioneer Unit. Let's all get to know and interact with her and make her feel at home. Welcome, Linda!! And in her own words, an interesting bio:

Linda Yochim Bio

My personal priorities and goals have always been anchored in my devotion to God and my family. I am the mother of four children, married a man with 3 children and raised all of them together as one family unit.

With such a large family, cooking meals on a budget was a necessity. I used a lot of creativity to get the children to eat healthy.

I volunteered at our children's schools and served on many committees primarily focused on fund raising. I was a member of the Meadows Garden Club in Fort Bend County, Texas. Our club of gardening enthusiasts planted and maintained both the neighborhood park and the school garden. We shared plants and seeds; once a quarter had programs on plants and gardening techniques; and at Christmas we decorated and organized a home tour. We offered the students in our neighborhood elementary school opportunities to learn about the plants in the garden and participate in planting and maintenance.

I started a career in international technical sales after our youngest child entered Middle School. I traveled to the largest food and beverage companies in the world. I retired in 2015 and my experience with international travel provided an opportunity for me to now use what I learned and experienced to help others have amazing vacations.

For recreation my husband and I chase our 13 grandchildren, dive and now play in a Brenham pickleball league.



SENSORY GARDEN

As this newsletter reaches you the holidays are over and Christmas decorations are put away till next year, gifts are returned for what you would really like, New Year's resolutions are made and immediately forgotten and best of all, you take out a gym membership that will be given up within a month! We see ourselves doing these same things year after year. Aren't we such creatures of habit!

One thing I can suggest on the gym membership is forget it and spend time in the gardens we support, Sensory and Festival Hill. At Sensory you can start out with a work day, Saturday, January 19th, and on February 1st the Kindergarten class will come for the whole day. They can keep you hopping! On the work day you will get plenty of exercise as there are trees that need to be trimmed and the brush needs to be pulled to one spot. If there is anyone who will be able to haul away the debris, please let me know. This is always a challenge.

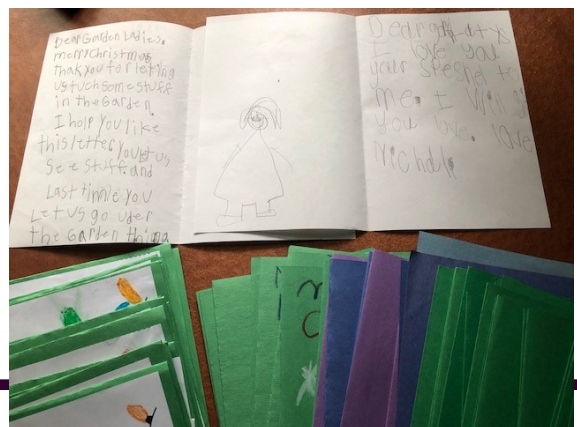
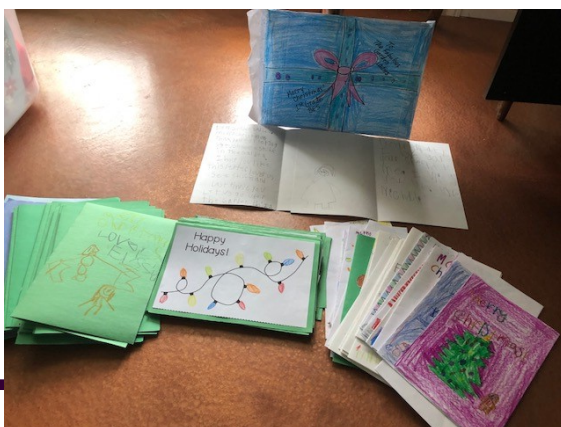
The Kindergarten class is always on a Friday and it is all day. The First Grade is on Monday and Tuesday. Monday is all day and Tuesday is half a day. These classes only come once a month. When the students break for lunch, some of us go into Brenham and have lunch also. If you have never helped with the students, you will find it is such a joy. I will send out at the first of each month what the Kindergarten and First Grade will be studying on that visit to the garden and if you have a specialty in that field, I will gladly relinquish the mantle and let you lead the students. I have the curriculum for the Kindergarten class through the end of 2019, but the First Grade takes a bit more "pressure" to know what they will be studying on their visit.

The first grade gave the "Garden Ladies" Christmas cards and an It Must Be Heaven Apple Pie (yes, it came home with me!). I read every one of those cards and will send a thank you to my contact at the school. I hope you can enlarge the pictures below and see what these two particular letters say---one telling us we are so "speshel" -- these students don't realize how "speshel" they are to us! I will bring the cards to our January meeting to share with you.

My hope for the New Year is that each of us will give more time to our Unit gardens. These gardens are what we make them as there is no one else to maintain them! The gardens would not be the same without us. My hope, too, is that you will ignore the 20 hours you need each year to retain your membership and make the effort to give more hours in each garden. Helping out with the students can help you rack up lots of volunteer hours.

I wish all of you a blessed New Year!

Johnnie Pitts,
Sensory Garden Chair



The History and Mystery of Herbs - Stridolo

Botanical Name: *Silene vulgaris* (sometimes listed as *Silene inflata*)

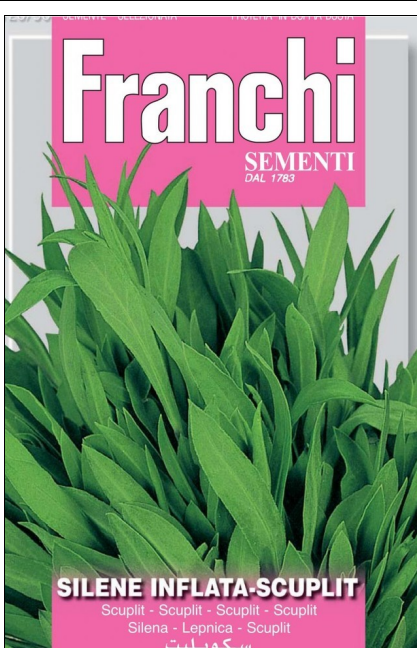
Common Name(s): stridolo, scuplit, sculpit, maiden's tears or bladder campion

Family: Caryophyllaceae

One of the great mysteries of herbs is that just when you think you pretty much have heard of them all, another one comes along and intrigues you. That is the case with this little herb from Italy commonly called stridolo. Just recently I came across its name and a brief description and my first thought was that I needed to find out more and find a source. Thank goodness for Google and Wikipedia!

I found some basic information on the plant, not much grant you, but it was enough to let me know that it might be worth a try to grow here. I then found a source of seeds that had some in stock (Terroir Seeds, just in case you might want to try it too) and ordered a few packages. The cultivation information is rather sketchy and I'm not sure that it will survive our winters, but it is supposed to be a perennial and I procured two packets of seed, so I'll experiment and risk one of them now.

As you can see in the picture to the right above, the plant has somewhat small, lanceolate leaves that are said to be best when harvested at a young stage. The descriptions said that the older they get, they will get more pungent. The flavor is reported to be a blend of arugula, chicory and tarragon. I'm not sure that I'd ever think of throwing all three of those together in a recipe, but perhaps it might work.



In Italy, this little plant's homeland, it is often harvested in the wild, and its most traditional uses are as a flavoring in risotto and omelets. It is also becoming a popular salad additive and is increasing in popularity in the northern Mediterranean. Evidently it also grows wild in parts of Spain, where it is known as *collejas*, is growing in popularity, and is used to flavor a dish known as *gazpacho viudo* (widower gazpacho). It is also said to have escaped cultivation in parts of North America. I've not seen it growing wild, but then again North America is a big place. Thus I looked it up on the USDA web site and came up with a map of North America that shows it now growing wild in about 2/3 of the US—mostly in the northern tier of states, and it is not shown as growing wild in Texas. Even with that news I'm not going to give up on it before I give it a go.

As you can also note in the upper photo, the flowers are white to pale pink and look like small dangling balloons with the petals flaring out at the bottom.

The lower picture is of a seed package produced by Seed from Italy and listed on their web site at www.growitalian.com. They might be a good source as well and perhaps when time permits I'll look over their site and see if there might be any more interesting herbs I've never heard of.

I look forward to giving it a try and will let you know if I succeed or not. I hope that you will give something new a try in the new year as well!

Best Wishes for a Wonderful 2019!
Henry Flowers, HSA Pioneer Unit member

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

January 1 — Carolyn Thomas
January 7 — Mary Doebbeling
January 9 — Jerald Mize
January 18 — Verena Aeschbacher
January 19 — Kathe Forrest
Oscar Hillegeist
January 21 — JoAnn Reichle
January 26 — Georgia Sowers
January 27 — Cindy Nash
January 28 — Euphanel Goad



UPCOMING HSA WEBINAR: Touching all of your Senses with Herbs William Varney (our south central District Delegate)

Monday, January 28, 2019 - 12:00 noon CST

Liberate your Senses! Learn how herbs can enhance your life through your senses in your home, garden, kitchen, and bath. The power of herbs and flowers can restore the balance between your mind and body.



WILLIAM VARNEY: ENTREPRENEUR • BOTANIST • CHEF

In 1985, Bill moved to the quaint town of Fredericksburg, Texas, and opened an herb shop. Quickly, the shop grew at a jack-in-the-beanstalk pace, and in 1991 he moved the fledgling business to the old abandoned Lehne-Itz Homestead. It is there that he built The Fredericksburg Herb Farm - originally four acres of gardens and shops, a day spa, restaurant, bed and breakfast, and herbal manufacturing warehouse. That same year, the Herb Farm's Edible Flowers Herb Vinegar received the Outstanding Condiment Award at The International Fancy Food show in New York City, fueling interest in the fledgling company, and tripling sales of their herbal products. He is self-taught in cooking with herbs, has cooked at The James Beard House in NYC, and has appeared on The Food Network and been featured in many publications around the U.S. for his creative concept of herbs, cooking, and gardening.

Register for webinars at herbsociety.org. There is no cost to members. Past webinars can also be viewed at the website.

January 2019

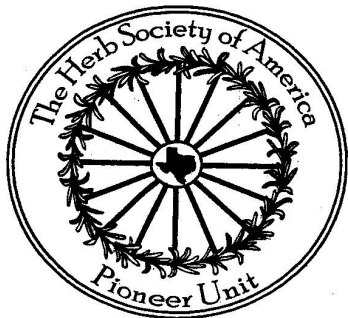


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group CG = Culinary Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	1 	2 CG at 11:00 Menke House	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 Pioneer Unit Meeting	11	12
13	14	15	16	17 BSG at 9:00 FH	18	19 SG Work Day
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Newsletter Deadline Irowlett@gmail.com	28 HSA Webinar 12:00 noon	29	30	31 		

February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group CG = Culinary Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden				1 SG Students in the garden	2
3	4	5	6 CG at 11:00 Menke House	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 BSG at 9:00 FH HSA Webinar	22	23
24 Newsletter Deadline Irowlett@gmail.com	25	26	27	28		





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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—Kathe Forrest
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers
Treasurer—Beverly Elam

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