



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

May 2016

Volume 23, Number 9

May 1
May Day

—
May 5
Cinco de Mayo

—
May 8
Mothers' Day

—
May 21
Corn Planting
Full Moon

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: May 12, 2016

Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting

Location: Brenham Presbyterian Church
900 South Jackson Street, Brenham

Directions: From Highway 290 in Brenham, take Business 36 north,
turn west on College Avenue, and then south on Jackson
Street.

Program: Effective Bulb Growing

Speaker: Chris Wiesinger

Angel: Lynn Ehler

Hosts: Cheryl Easley, Alton Ehler, Joyce Lane, Lucy Nehr Korn,
and Betty Powell

Lunch: Mom's Favorites



May 30
Memorial Day



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This has certainly been an interesting spring, and I hope summer will be more boring—in the weather department that is. Boring would be great—not hot, not cold, not overly wet, not dry—maybe it will be a "Momma Bear" summer!

We have more wonderful programs coming up this month and in the next two months and I hope to see you there. The June meeting is especially important as that will be our annual business meeting and election of new officers. And, speaking of such, I urge you to consider yourself for one of the officer positions or maybe one of the committee chair positions—most of which are board positions. Being on the board can be a rewarding experience and it certainly helps one to get in better touch with the running of the unit. One of the requirements of being a member in the Pioneer unit is to "be willing to hold office or serve on committees" so you should endeavor to do so and fulfill this membership obligation. It is not fair to those who do this if you don't. If we were all to sit on the sidelines, then nothing would get done—no great programs, no wonderful meals, no learning about herbs and none of the wonderful camaraderie of fellow unit members. If you have an interest in taking part and have questions or don't know where to begin, contact one of the current board members (listed in the yearbook), and I'm sure that any and all of them will be willing to give some guidance.

Just a few days ago I returned from the HSA national membership meeting in Asheville, North Carolina. This was just a one-day meeting, but it was a great one. Officers were installed for the new HSA Board of Directors which will take over in July. One of those officers is our own Treasurer, Janie Plummer. Janie was elected to be the new Treasurer at the national level, and I'd personally like to thank her for her willingness to move into this position. I hope that you will do the same, and we should all give her support in this new endeavor. Other members of our district who are on the board are Sara Holland, our district delegate, and Gloria Hunter, who holds the national level membership chair. This is great representation for our district!

The new HSA President will be Rae McKimm. Rae is currently Vice-President, and I hope that many of you had a chance to meet her when she came to the Herbal Forum last year. Rae is from Arkansas, and it is very notable that the HSA EdCon, a larger meeting over multiple days, will take place next year in May in Little Rock, Arkansas. The dates for the event are May 3-7. I urge more of you to consider attending—especially as it is in a location that is within relatively easy driving distance. Her selection for Honorary President of the organization is P. Allen Smith, whom you probably know from television. I believe that there are plans for a tour to go to his home and gardens at the meeting, so if you are interested you'll need to register early as I'm sure the tour will fill fast.

This year the Pioneer Unit had ten active members in attendance at the Annual Meeting. I would love to see that number double for next year. At this year's meeting there were about 270 members in attendance from all across the country. Because of the location, a majority of those members were from the mid-Atlantic district. Because the meeting is in the southeast district next year and very close to our south-central district, I'm hoping that the members of these districts will swell the ranks.

Continued on next page

There is a lot to do in Arkansas, so you could easily turn the trip into a vacation, and it might be fun to carpool with other members. Please give it some thought and at least pencil it in on your calendar. There is more information about the schedule on the HSA web site and more will be coming out as it is available.

In addition to meeting members of other units and districts, there are always great educational and entertaining programs. This year the programs focused on the local region—a great program on Andre Michaux, an early French plantsman who travelled and collected plants in the region and much of the eastern seaboard; a program about the beautiful, local UNC Arboretum; a program about the collection and preservation of local germplasm (seeds) at said arboretum; and an entertaining program (with harmonica and songs) about the medicinal plants of the region. After district meetings, there was a tasting of local beers and wines, which I have heard was quite nice (as I don't drink alcohol I couldn't say myself). In a meeting of unit chairs, I had a chance to hear about the activities and issues of other units, and it made me very proud to be part of a unit that is growing and prospering. We are very lucky to be able to get by with only one fundraising event per year, even though it is a big one and takes lots of work. Could you imagine spending the time and effort to put on multiple events per year? I'm glad that we don't and that we are able to raise the money to provide for great programming and so much more.

As I am nearing the end of my term as unit chairman, I'd like to thank you all for your support of the Pioneer Unit and also of the two gardens that we support. We have many great members—both long-term (I won't say "old") and new and all are vital to our continued success. Here's to you, Pioneer Unit members!

Best wishes for a continuance of our enjoyable spring and for a great summer,

Henry Flowers, Pioneer Unit Chairman



FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIR

A big thank you to all involved in carrying out Linda Franzo's program at our April meeting. From the members' comments I've received, the program was a great success. For those of you who missed the program, you missed a great experience. I'm not much for very spicy foods, but Linda made learning about them a lot of fun.

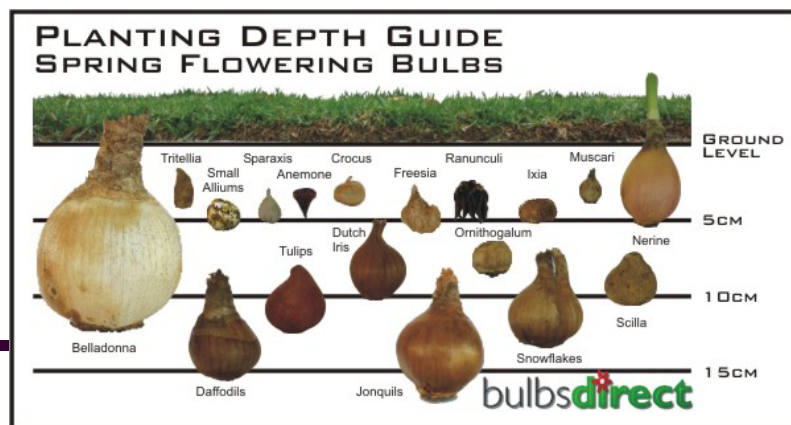
Our program for the May meeting is "Heirloom Bulbs for All Seasons." It will be presented by Chris Wiesinger. Chris hit the big time when an article in the New York Times splashed his name across the nation. Here's a quote from the article: "Mr. Wiesinger makes a living finding pretty things in ravaged places. In 2004 he started the Southern Bulb Company with the aim of reintroducing flowers long out of vogue, committing himself exclusively to those that have ably asserted themselves against the particular cruelties of exceedingly hot weather for decades, even centuries." You'll find it interesting to see how he got started: he had to hunt up what were common bulbs from many years ago.

I first met Chris a number of years ago when all he had was his pickup, a shovel, and a piece of land to start his bulb nursery. He now has a strong bulb nursery production and sales business, has two books in publication, and has a heavy speaking schedule. But he still has a pickup and his trusty shovel. To me, Chris is doing for heirloom bulbs what the Antique Rose Emporium did for antique and species roses: making the public aware of the beneficial aspects of these survivors. Be sure to attend this program for you'll come away from it with a warm and wonderful appreciation for quality heirloom bulbs. Over the years, Kay and I have bought many bulbs from Chris, and they've all been winners. He'll be talking about bulbs that are suitable for our soils and climate. I've asked him to bring bulbs and copies of his books to sell to make it easier for us to obtain them. I believe you'll find this program to be a very educational and enjoyable one.

As mentioned at the front of the newsletter, we're meeting at the Brenham Presbyterian Church, 900 South Jackson Street in Brenham. We're actually meeting in the Fellowship Hall building. The church complex is located just two blocks east of the Blinn College football stadium and the "Old Main" admin building. Our lunch theme is "Mom's Favorites." Because Host Teams are responsible for the meeting room set up and take down (see page 35 of the Yearbook), we'll know closer to the meeting date how much rearranging we'll need to do to set up and what state we're to leave the meeting room. As soon as I hear, I'll pass on that information so we can plan what time we'll need to be there for set up.

See y'all at the meeting.

Tony Scanapico
Programs Chair



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

Henry Flowers, Chair, welcomed members to the April meeting and thanked everyone for helping to make the 2016 Forum a success.

Tony Scanapico, Vice Chair Programs, reminded everyone that next month's program will be held at Brenham Presbyterian Church with a presentation by Chris Wiesinger on Effective Bulb Growing. Tony then introduced speaker Linda Franzo, chair of the New Orleans Unit, who presented a program on the new cuisine of New Orleans with emphasis on Mexican and Vietnamese influences. Lots of delicious samples were available.

Betty Pior, Hospitality, thanked angels Jane Press and Pam Traylor and hostesses Sara Holland, Marijane Lipscomb, Candi Glancy, Beverly Green, and Mike and Pat Cox. Door prizes were won by Pam Traylor, Susan Yancey, Bonnie Lout, Henry Flowers, Susan Bame, Karen Cornwell, and Pat Schmidt.

Henry welcomed new members Royceanna Kendall, Robert Lake, Lori Yeats, Terry Ross, and Ray Hayes, and invited members to learn more about them in the recent newsletter.

Janie Plummer had preliminary figures for Forum. The plant sale grossed \$45,289.00, TWSS grossed \$8,555.00, and the Gazebo grossed \$2,239.00 for a gross profit of \$56,083.00. Net profit to date is \$20,400.00 and final figures will be available shortly. Henry announced that the Unit's check to HSA to support the National Herb Garden Internship Program is in the amount of \$2,775.00. The Pioneer Unit is one of the largest contributors to the Program.

Carolyn Thomas, Herbal Forum Coordinator, thanked everyone for an outstanding Forum and said she heard many comments about the helpfulness and friendliness of Pioneer Unit members. Carolyn's main recommendation to make next year even better is to have members actively marketing the plants and shop items. She asked members to become familiar with our products in order to make this happen.

Georgia Sowers welcomed guests Belinda Weatherly, Janie Cornelius and Bonnie Lout, all guests of Susan Yancey, and Peggy Trochta, guest of Betty Pior. Membership renewal forms are due by May 1st and there is a copy of the form in the newsletter as well as at the meeting.

The District Gathering will be in Beaumont in October.

A program at the Brenham ISD Sensory Garden called STEM Night will be presented this evening. Verena Aeschbacher is in charge with help from several volunteers, and members are encouraged to attend.

Henry announced that after lunch, plants would be available at a discount at Festival Hill, as well as more free tomatoes and pepper plants.

Louise Rice, Thyme Well Spent, said today is the last chance to buy discounted items from the shop.

Linda Franzo said how much she enjoys Forum each year and praised the Unit for an outstanding job.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary

April 20, 2016, PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING Held at Festival Hill

Attendees: Henry Flowers, Tony Scanapico, Georgia Sowers, Janie Plummer, Carolyn Thomas, Louise Rice, Karen Cornwell, Lynn Ehler, Pat Cox

Programs Report: Tony Scanapico confirmed the speaker presentations for the May and June meetings and noted that he has made a start on programs for the next year.

Membership Report: Georgia Sowers asked for Board ratification for the memberships of Royceanna Kendall, Terry Ross, Lori Yeats, Ray Hayes, and Robert Lake.

Motion: Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to ratify the memberships as requested.

Treasury Report: Janie Plummer distributed the PU Quarterly Income Statement and PU Budget Summary Report for Three Months Ending March 31, 2016. Janie also distributed financial information for Forum 2016 showing a gross income of \$57,045.57 and net income of \$20,351.29.

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

Standing Committee Reports

- A. *Archives and Rosemary* – Lynn Ehler has enough cards and needs stamps.
- B. a. Scholarships – The Unit has received one application for a college scholarship.
b. Workshops – In response to many requests, Henry and Barbara Hemmer will schedule a hypertufa workshop for the fall.
- C. *Gardens* – The STEM night event at the Brenham ISD Sensory Garden on April 14th was very well attended. The Festival Hill Gardens are looking good.
- D. *Plant Sale* – Henry distributed a copy of plant cost figures for the 2016 Forum. Money was saved by propagating plants and buying fewer large ones. However, the public's interest in pepper plants was not as great as expected.
- E. *Thyme Well Spent* – Louise Rice reported on TWSS items that sold well and some that didn't and items for sale in the shop will be adjusted accordingly next year. It is planned that more active marketing will be done, both of shop items and plant sale items.
- F. *Herbal Forum Coordinator* – Carolyn Thomas was pleased with forum 2016 and praised the hard work of many of the Unit's newest members.

New Business: Henry and Sara Holland are working on the formation of a new Unit culinary group and more information will be forthcoming as available.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox, Secretary

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Our April 2016 meeting was so well attended with four more prospective active members! We had just introduced and welcomed five new members a month prior in March - our forces are growing! Active member Susan Yancey brought three of these ladies with her. They are Belinda Weatherly from Industry, and Janie Cornelius and Bonnie Lout, both from New Ulm, Texas. Peggy Trochta visited us from La Grange with active member Betty Pior. We are happy the four of you joined us and surely look forward to seeing you this month at our meeting in Brenham. Also three of our Affiliate Members joined us: Joan Jordan, Marijane Lipscomb who helped the Hostess Team, and Pamela Murski. Thank you ladies for being with us!

Members are renewing regularly with their dues payable and due this month, and our Renewal Application is online and extra forms will be available at our Registration Table on May 12th at Brenham Presbyterian Church. Membership is also recording volunteer hours and non-reimbursable donations as reported by our members and is grateful for this. These hours will be helpful to our National organization, the Herb Society of America, and need to be reported through June 30, 2016, for Membership's Annual Report. Thank you for your timeliness in these two areas.

Another item of interest is Article III Membership A. Active on page 32 of our current yearbook, wherein it reflects that "An active member shall support the endeavors of the Unit during the fiscal year. He or she must: 1. Be willing to hold office or serve on committees" followed by four other requirements. Our Board of Directors are up for election this year, so if a member is interested in any of these positions or if one knows of a member whom they wish to nominate, please be sure to contact Linda Rowlett, Past Chair, who heads up the Nominating Committee so she may contact you or the possible candidate.

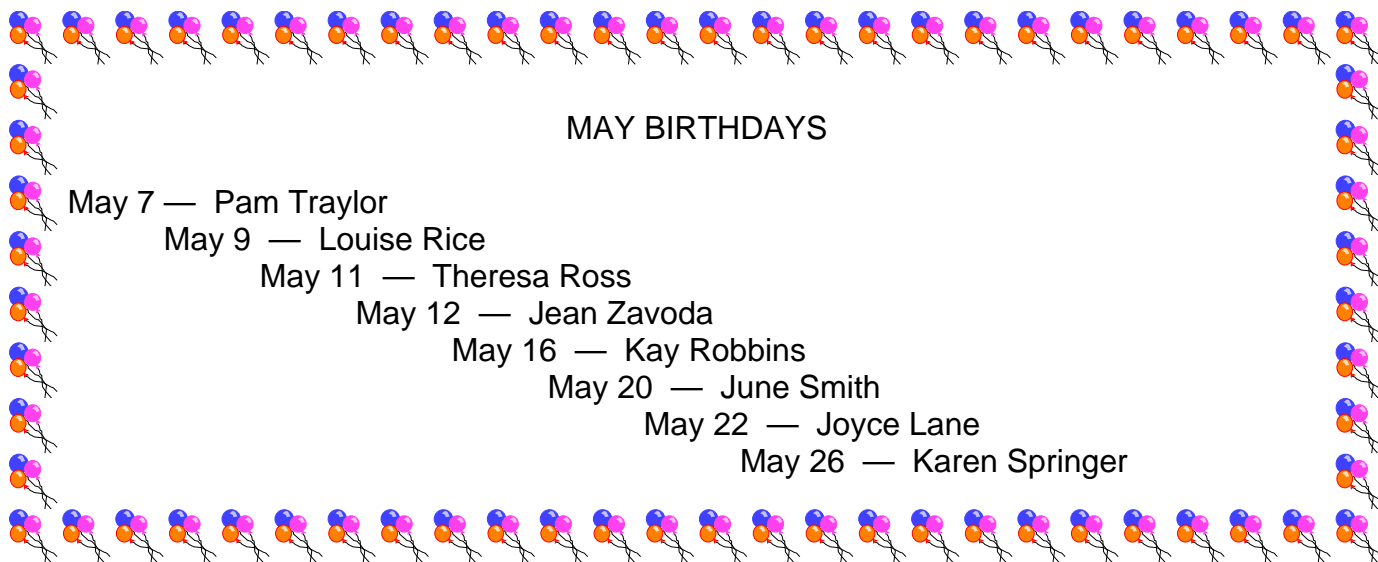
May, June, and July are really busy months so enjoy the next few months and look forward to being involved as you can. As always, if you have any questions or comments about Membership, please contact me at gzsowers@att.net or call [281-486-6006](tel:281-486-6006) so I or any other member may help you out. Thank you and I look forward to seeing you May 12th!

Herbally,
Georgia Sowers, Membership Chair





Volunteers of the Month for May 2016 are all of you, our valued non-Members who helped at Forum, including Ann Wilson and husband Eric, Wendy Matthews, Hannah Mallon, Linda Rowlett's husband Doug, Sue Edmundson's husband Dean, Pat Cox's daughter-in-law Keelia Ritch and friend and frequent guest Joanie Havlick, Volunteers at Festival Hill, and non-profit organizational members, all who helped make this another successful Herbal Forum and Plant Sale. If a volunteer is not recognized here it's because we missed seeing you, but we are appreciative for your help. Your efforts were noticed and superbly complimented by the Unit and by guests and customers who visited us. Enough cannot be expressed for your giving efforts, and each and every one of you deserves a major pat on the back for a job well done. It surely takes a village, and for certain **you**, to pull off such a feat. Thank you, everyone!



MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 7 — Pam Traylor

May 9 — Louise Rice

May 11 — Theresa Ross

May 12 — Jean Zavoda

May 16 — Kay Robbins

May 20 — June Smith

May 22 — Joyce Lane

May 26 — Karen Springer

Join the blog at HSA and keep in touch! Simply visit the website at herbsociety.org and look for the link at the bottom of the home page. It looks like this:



The most recent blog entry, dated May 5, 2016, is about keeping a garden journal. You can participate in the discussion or simply read the interesting entries. On the blog page, you can sign up to receive email notifications of when new entries are posted or simply check back from time to time.

SENSORY GARDEN NEWS

This year, Brenham ISD combined Family Night at the Outdoor Learning Center with a district-wide Elementary Science (STEM) Night (re-branded as "Brenham ISD Elementary STEM Night"). The event was held Thursday, April 14th, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

The activities at the Outdoor Learning Center stayed the same, but efforts were made to continue to broaden the participation.

Our Sensory Garden was a highlight of the evening! Stem = Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The Outdoor Learning Center offered a number of stations for the children and their families to visit, including our Sensory Garden, the Butterfly Garden, Parks and Wildlife, Junior Master Naturalists, Composting and Recycling, and several indoor stations. The program was extended to all Elementary Schools of Brenham which provided a great amount of visitors (with overflowing parking lots!). Our Sensory Garden was a main attraction, and visitors admired all the enjoyable and useful plants. Children loved the Alphabet Walk. I wish more of our members could enjoy the successful evening! Plan to be part of the event next year. Thank you very much to all who came and helped to make this great event possible. Your efforts inspire upcoming generations.

A special thanks goes to Henry Flowers for the great design and layout and all his work in the Garden. For the classes, the round Sight Bed in the center is ideal to assemble the children, and there is plenty of space to take groups around and accommodate all the visitors. The Gazebo offers a place to rest, renew, and learn!

Verena Aeschbacher, Sensory Garden Program Coordinator



Herb of May—Nasturtium

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

Botanical Name/Etymology: *Tropaeolum majus* L.

Family Name: Tropaeolaceae

Common Name(s): Garden nasturtium (lesser: Indian cress or monk's cress.) Note: not closely related to the genus *Nasturtium*, which includes watercress.

Origin: Andes mountain area from Bolivia to Columbia, with adaptive versions from the cold mountain tops to the lower warm and wetter areas.



Growth Habit: A widely-known small blooming garden plant, nasturtium is usually treated as an annual in temperate climates. It has no lignifying, permanent support tissues, or stems per se, and has to depend on the support of surrounding plants and support structures to reach any height. New leaves are continually developing at the shoot apex with the first sign of flower buds appearing at the axils. Young leaves are initially indented, but are not attached to the stalk at the leaf margin, but the lamina is more or less centrally balanced on it. As growth continues, the fleshy stalks elongate and turn toward the light, supporting the leaves, which become horizontal much like the floating leaves of water plants. Nasturtiums need adequate water as even temporary dryness will cause extensive wilting. Hydrathodes, cells active in the excretion of water, are found in the leaf margins. After a cool night in early summer, a droplet of water glitters at the end of every vein. The high water content explains why nasturtiums are sensitive to frost which causes total collapse of the foliage.

The usually yellow-to-red-toned flowers often show dark striations on the upper two petals, and the flowers grow singly from the leaf axils on long erect stalks. The five sepals are yellow-tinged, not green like most flowers. The most notable flower feature is a long spur which is not developed from a sepal like many flowers, but grows directly from the flower stalk.

In their native habitat, the flowers are pollinated by hummingbirds, their beaks entering deep into the spur to reach the sweet and somewhat peppery hot nectar. The impression is that the flower seeks to relate closely to the bird in form and color. The flower persists about a week. The petals drop off after pollination and the flower stalk bends over twice, going down so far that the fruits ripen beneath the leaves close to the ground.

Growth (Cultural) Requirements: Nasturtiums tolerate a wide range of soils and do very well in sandy soils. Rich, fertile soil tends to produce lots of leaves and few flowers.

Propagation: Nasturtiums are easily grown from seed and are often sown directly in sunny beds. Because of its popularity as a flowering garden plant, many cultivars have been developed by seed companies. Some widely available varieties include the 'Alaska' mix which has beautiful green and white variegated foliage, the dwarf 'Jewel' mix, and the more vining variety 'Gleam'.

In much of the South, they are grown as a fall and winter annual as they resent hot weather. Along a south-facing wall in full winter sun works best.

Nasturtiums are considered widely useful as companion garden plants. They repel many cucurbit pests like squash bugs, cucumber beetles and several caterpillars, and are protective of many cruciferous plants. They are also used as a trap crop for blackfly aphids.

Folklore and History: Nasturtiums are very popular as a "cottage garden" plant throughout the United States and Europe, having been introduced to European gardeners in the 16th century.

Chemistry: Nasturtiums produce benzyl isothiocyanate, a hot mustard-like compound, which gives them their hot, peppery taste.

Plant Part(s) Used: The flowers are edible and can be used as a beautiful and peppery-tasting addition to salads and as uncooked food garnishes. The flowers contain about 130 milligram (mg) vitamin C per 100 grams, about the same amount as found in parsley. They also contain up to 45 mg of lutein per 100 g, the highest amount found in any edible plant. All parts of the plant appear to be antibiotic and an infusion of the leaves can be used to increase resistance to bacterial infections and to clear nasal and bronchial catarrh. The leaves are antibacterial, antifungal, antiseptic diuretic, expectorant, laxative and stimulant.

Time of Harvest: Nasturtium parts can be harvested any time they are available.

Culinary Uses: As noted above, all parts of nasturtiums are edible. Plant parts, especially the peppery-tasting flowers, are used raw in salads. Seed are pickled to produce faux-capers.

Medicinal Uses: Nasturtium has long been used in Andean herbal medicine as a disinfectant and wound-healing herb, as well as an expectorant to relieve chest conditions. Since the early 1950s, they have proven an effective treatment of respiratory and urinary infections. The active compound, benzyl isothiocyanate, acts on both bacteria and fungi, and to date very little resistance has developed. Nasturtium compounds are also widely used in acne preparations.

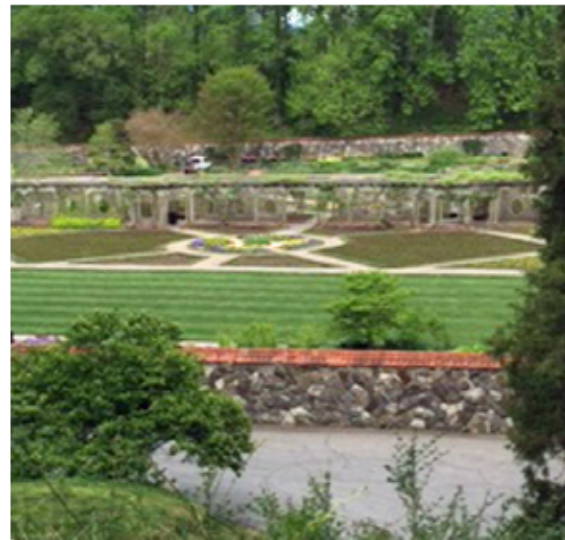
Other Uses: To enjoy a blooming plant indoors, reportedly one can take inside good-sized stems a foot or so long with lots of flower buds and place in a vase of water where they will bloom for several days. Roots may form: shorten the plants to 4-6 inches and plant outside.

Sources for Seed or Plants: Seeds are widely available, and small plants are seasonally available from garden centers.

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 Joyce Lane





One of the highlights of visiting Asheville was a tour of the Biltmore Estate Gardens.


SAVE THE DATES:

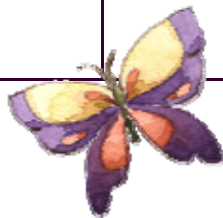
October 28-29, 2016: District Gathering, Beaumont, Texas

May 3 –7, 2017: EdCon, Little Rock, Arkansas

May 2016

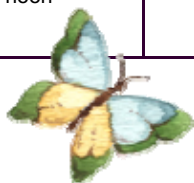


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	4	5 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	6	7
8 	9	10 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	11	12 Pioneer Unit Meeting	13	14
15	16	17 FH Workday 8:30 to noon HSA Webinar	18	19 FH Workday BSG 8:30 to noon	20	21
22	23	24 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	25	26 FH Workday 8:30 to noon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



June 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden		1	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 HSA Webinar	15	16 FH Workday BSG 8:30 to noon	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	29	30 FH Workday 8:30 to noon		





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—Henry Flowers

Vice Chair Programs—Tony Scanapico
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers

Treasurer—Janie Plummer

Pioneer Unit
The Herb Society of America
Post Office Box 23
Round Top, Texas 78954