



# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

November 4  
Frosty Full Moon

November 5  
Daylight Savings  
Ends  
(fall back one hour)



November 11  
Veterans Day

November 23



November 2017

Volume 25, Number 3

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: November 9, 2017

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

Location: Round Top Retreat,  
Andreas Road at Krause Road  
Round Top, Texas

Directions: From Highway 290, take Texas 237 south, turn right on Jaster Road (toward Festival Hill); turn right on Krause Road then left on Andreas Road. (more details in the Yearbook)

Program: The Nature of Spirit or is it the Spirit of Nature?

Speaker: John Dromgoole  
The Natural Gardener

Angel: Robert Lake

Hosts: Euphanel Goad, Carla Lessard, Jane Press, Louise Rice,  
Kay Scanapico, Mary Sockwell, and Georgetta Welch

Lunch: Thanksgiving Assigned Favorites



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings!

November is the month to give thanks for all that we are given, and I give thanks that the Pioneer Unit is such an active, vibrant, and expanding group. Be sure to welcome new members; we get so busy at the monthly meetings that we may forget to introduce ourselves to new faces.

I am also greatly appreciative of all our members and prospective members who have helped over the past year to make our meetings and the Herbal Forum successful and who have given time and energy to help maintain our gardens. Special kudos as well to all the officers and committee chairs who have attended multiple board meetings and who have worked hard to keep the Unit cohesive and successful.

It is time to get serious in our preparations for the 23rd annual Herbal Forum at Festival Hill. There will be workshops for preparing vinegars, mustards, jams and jellies, dried herbal blends, and many other items to get our Thyme Well Spent Shoppe stocked up with goodies. All of our members have unique and useful talents, and I'm thankful for them all! Pitch in where you can and where your interests and abilities draw you, and we'll be assured to continue our success. We will be seeking volunteers to work at the Plant Sale soon after the new year begins.

Our November meeting at the Round Top Retreat is always a highlight of the year, and I look forward to seeing you all there and to enjoying great food and friendship.

Also for your calendars:

Herbfest Friday, November 3, 2017, 11am to 2pm in Wimberly; more information at [hillcountryherbs.org](http://hillcountryherbs.org)

45th Annual Herb Fair, Saturday, November 4, at the Judson Robinson Community Center, Houston, more information at [herbsociety-stu.org](http://herbsociety-stu.org)

HSA Annual Meeting of Members, June 1, 2018, in Tarrytown, New York

HSA Annual Meeting of Members and Educational Conference, June 2019, Madison, Wisconsin; planning is underway.

Best wishes for a pleasant autumn and wonderful Thanksgiving.

Karen Cornwell  
Unit Chair



## FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

We all thoroughly enjoyed Linda Rowlett's presentation of "The Witching Herbs" in October. After her short but informative talk ( who knew witches did so much good?), we all got to make an herbal "witch" craft to take home. I am enjoying burning the incense we made at our table.

We've had a few cool nights which means fall has arrived! The holidays are just around the corner, and our November meeting will be held once again at the lovely Round Top Retreat. Our speaker will be John Dromgoole of the Natural Gardener nursery in Austin. Although well known in the horticultural world, here is some more information about John and his nursery:

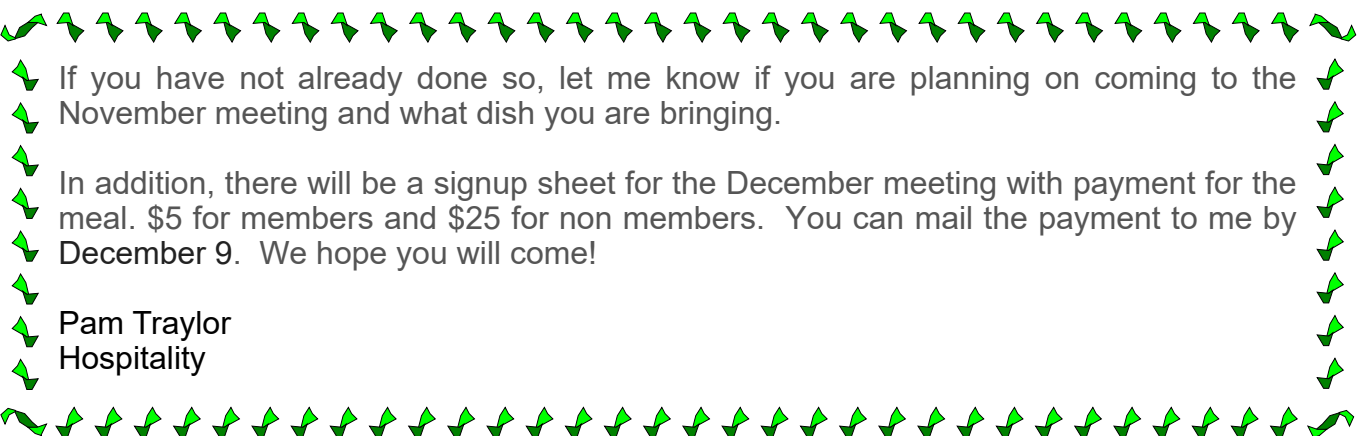
John's award-winning nursery, The Natural Gardner, is a five-time winner of Today's Garden Center's "Revolutionary 100 Garden Centers," fourteen-time winner of Austin Chronicle's "Best of Austin," and has been featured in many national gardening magazines. In 2014, The Natural Gardener was named one of the Top 5 Garden Centers in the country and Number 1 in the Southwest Region by Today's Garden Center Magazine.

For 36 years, John has hosted America's longest continuously running organic gardening radio talk show on 590 KLBJ. Currently he appears on "Central Texas Gardener" (over 22 years) and the "Weekend Gardener" (21 years). He has won state, local, and regional awards for his work in promoting organic gardening and farming, including "Texas Legendary Promoter of Organics."

John's main focus is to bring new and old gardeners on board with the organic technique, teaching them how easy, beneficial and beautiful it is to be an organic gardener. John is deeply concerned about protecting our water resources and is teaching gardeners how to make the change to water-conscious landscapes and lifestyles.

See you on November 9!

Phoebe Lake  
Programs Chair



If you have not already done so, let me know if you are planning on coming to the November meeting and what dish you are bringing.  
 In addition, there will be a signup sheet for the December meeting with payment for the meal. \$5 for members and \$25 for non members. You can mail the payment to me by December 9. We hope you will come!  
 Pam Traylor  
 Hospitality

MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING  
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
PIONEER UNIT  
October 12, 2017

Karen Cornwell, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting at Brenham Presbyterian Church.

Phoebe Lake, Vice Chair Programs, introduced speaker and Pioneer Unit member Linda Rowlett who gave a talk on 'The Witching Herbs' followed by a workshop session during which each table made a different craft using some of the herbs from Linda's talk.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Membership, was absent. Visitors included Cathy Nitsch and Johnnie Pitts (guests of Phoebe Lake), Diana Sellers and Lucie Lambert (guests of Pat Cox), Marcella Ausmus (guest of Kathe Forrest), and HSA membership chair Gloria Hunter.

Karen directed members to the Unit website to view the final reports submitted by chairs and committee heads.

Ginger Heath asked if members had interest in and ideas for a possible workshop to make decorative plant stakes to sell at Forum.

Susan Bame thanked all volunteers who worked at the Brenham ISD sensory garden, including Robert Nash with his chainsaw. The next work day will be at the end of the month.

Sara Holland announced a Culinary Group meeting on Wednesday, November 1, in the Menke House parlor and asked attendees to bring a dish containing sage.

Henry Flowers asked for donations of terrycloth towels (do not have to be new) to be used in making hypertufa containers. These can be given to Henry or Kay Robbins.

Kay Robbins has received no applications for the Unit scholarship and encourages participation. The scholarship is for \$150.00 and can be used in the preparation of a program presentation or newsletter article or other Unit-related project.

Pam Traylor thanked lunch hostesses Cheryl Easley, Joyce Lane, Ronda Herzog, Karen Springer, and Henry Flowers who also served as speaker angel. Door prizes were won by Marcella Ausmus, Belinda Weatherly, Susan Yancey and Diana Sellers. Pam asked members to sign up for Thanksgiving lunch including what dish they will bring, and for Christmas lunch at Festival Hill which is \$5.00 for members.

Phoebe Lake announced that next month's meeting is at the Round Top Retreat, and she is excited to welcome the speaker, John Dromgoole, owner of The Natural Gardener in Austin.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Cox, Secretary



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

I would like to start by commenting that I missed a great meeting and presentation in October and hope to more than make up for that this month. Visitors in October were Cathy Nitsch for her fourth visit and Johnnie Pitts for her third visit, both with Phoebe Lake. Diana Sellers and Lucie Lambert were with us for their first visits with Pat Cox. Marcella Ausmus was here for her second visit with Kathe Forrest. Also Gloria Hunter, the HSA Membership Chair, was in attendance. Our affiliate members Patricia Hoffmaster and Marijane Lipscomb were present as well. Thank you to all who visited us, and we sincerely hope to see you this month too at Round Top Retreat.

Because my Registration binders were not at the October meeting, many of our members responded to my request on the listserv to let me know if they were present or not so my records could be updated. Thank you to all who responded. I'll have your records on my hard drive coordinated properly.

Hours are being reported regularly; thank you so much! Our beautiful Fall weather is such a welcome respite from the hot Summer so please enjoy while you can. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Round Top Retreat for our Thanksgiving meeting and luncheon on November 9th. As always, if you have any questions, please email [gzsowers@att.net](mailto:gzsowers@att.net) or call [979-836-8228](tel:979-836-8228) so I can help you out. And wishing all a wonderful and grateful Thanksgiving 2017!

Herbally,

Georgia Sowers  
Membership Chair

### \*\*\*NEW ACTIVE MEMBER\*\*\*

Johnnie Pitts is our newest active member, effective October 2017. She was introduced to our unit by active member Phoebe Lake, and we're happy she has joined us. Johnnie moved to Burton recently after living in the Hill Country for a good while. She's looking forward to working with all of us and volunteering as needed. Johnnie has been retired for a few years but in times past had interesting careers in management at the VA Hospital, the US Attorney's Office, and the Court System in Houston. Her address is 12400 E Cedar St, Burton, Texas, with mail address of PO Box 132, Burton, Texas 77835-0132. Johnnie's cell phone is [512-940-7035](tel:512-940-7035), and her email address is [johnniepitts45@gmail.com](mailto:johnniepitts45@gmail.com). Her birthday is October 30. All contact information will be in the next print of our yearbook in September 2018 but will be included online soon. Thank you, Johnnie, for joining us. We all look forward to interacting with you. Welcome!!

**PIONEER UNIT BOARD MEETING**  
**October 18, 2017**  
**Menke House, Festival Hill**

Present: Karen Cornwell, Phoebe Lake, Georgia Sowers, Lucy Nehrkorn, Henry Flowers, Lynn Ehler, Cindy Nash, Susan Bame, Jane Press, and Pat Cox.

**Programs:** Phoebe Lake, Vice Chair Programs, has all programs in place for the coming year. Following a discussion regarding sign-up sheets for lunch hostesses, it was decided the sheets will be available at the June meeting in the future. Members will be asked to sign up for one lunch hostess duty and indicate on a separate sheet if they are willing to take extra dates if needed.

It was also suggested that the system for signing up for lunch hostesses be made clearer to new members and that new members should not sign up to be head hostess until they have hostess team experience.

**Membership:** Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Membership, reported two new members: Peggy Richardson and Johnnie Pitts.

**Motion:** A motion was made and approved out of committee to ratify new members Peggy Richardson and Johnnie Pitts.

**Treasurer:** Lucy Nehrkorn, Treasurer, distributed copies of the PU Quarterly Income Statement and PU Budget Summary Report for 3 Months Ending September 30, 2017.

**Standing Committee Reports**

*Archives and Rosemary* – Lynn Ehler will request more cards at the next Unit meeting.

*Education/Special Events* – Mary Reeves and Kay von Minden are working on a field trip.

*Scholarships* – No applications for member scholarships have been received yet.

*Gardens* – Henry Flowers is pleased to report more new member garden volunteers at Festival Hill.

The sensory garden at Brenham ISD is recovering from Hurricane Harvey damage. Susan Bame is researching better signage for the sensory garden and wants members to be aware they can work in the garden at any time and don't need to wait for an official work day.

*Communications* – Cindy Nash has contacted Texas Gardener magazine, Texas Highways, Texas Cooperative Power and Homegrown Texas about Forum 2018 advertising and to date has had positive feedback from two of the above. She is planning to place a Facebook ad which will reach a lot of people.

*Plant Sale/Gazebo* – Karen Cornwell and her new co-chair, Diana Reed, will begin plant sale preparations in January. Henry asked for donations of terry cloth towels (not new) to make a special kind of hypertufa for the Gazebo.

*Thyme Well Spent Shoppe* – Jane Press reported that Kathe Forrest and Belinda Weatherly have agreed to be hospitality co-chairs in Thyme Well Spent Shoppe for Forum 2018. Jane and Pat are asking for recipe ideas that contain Herb of the Year ginger for jams and jellies, lotions etc.

**New Business:** Henry has purchased a new projector for the Unit which was used at the last meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Cox, Secretary



## THYME WELL SPENT

In preparation for Forum 2018, Thyme Well Spent Shop needs the following:

1. Members who would like to help make jams and jellies are asked to contact Carla Lessard. Some jam/jelly-making experience is helpful. We also welcome recipe ideas containing Herb of the Year ginger.
2. Members who would like to help make new craft items for the shop are asked to contact Jane Press. Jane has several ideas for new products, and a workshop will be held when the group has decided what to make.
3. The shop needs dried items (plants, flowers, grasses etc.) to sell at Forum. Please give these to Jane or Pat.

Thanks for all your help!

Pat Cox and Jane Press  
Thyme Well Spent

## November Birthdays

November 2 — Cheryl Easley  
November 4 — Jacqui Highton  
November 7 — Belinda Weatherly  
November 14 — Lori Yeats  
November 19 — Lois Sutton  
November 24 — Barbara Hemmer  
November 26 — Diana Reed



**Herb of the Month of November and  
The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit  
Botany Study Group Data Sheet**

**Botanical Name/Etymology**

*Sesamum indicum* (syn. *S. orientale*)

**Family Name**

Pedaliaceae

**Common Name(s)**

sesame, benne (African), gingili, sements (ancient Egyptian), til, ajonnoli, tahini (ground paste), halvah (although usually used in reference to a confection that often contains sesame)

The botanical and common names of *Sesamum* and sesame are believed to be derived from the Arabic work for the plant and seeds – "simsim."

**Origin** — Native to Africa, but has been grown in India and the Near East for thousands of years and thus the specific epithet which would lead us to believe it is native to India. There are many wild "cousins" native to both Africa and India.

**History** — Sesame seed is considered to be the oldest oil seed crop cultivated by mankind (though some argue that linseed was produced earlier). It is mentioned as sements in the Egyptian Ebers papyri (a 65-foot-long scroll listing ancient herbs and spices discovered by the famous German Egyptologist, Ebers – dating to c. 1500BC) and was grown in both Egypt and Babylonia between 2200 and 538BC. An excavated site near Yerevan, Armenia, produced jars of sesame seeds that are from c.900-600BC, as well as elaborate equipment for the extraction of oil. It is one of the plants that were found in the tomb of the pharaoh Tutankhamen (1370-1352 BC).

**Growth Habit** — Upright annual from 2-6 feet in height. It loves heat and is drought tolerant.

**Leaves** — broadly lanceolate, opposite, and with an entire margin. They are around 2 inches wide and up to 5 inches long, but noticeably smaller as they progress up the plant to the flowering tips. The foliage has a notable, pungent aroma.

**Flowers** — white, about 1 inch long, and tubular – perfectly sized to fit bees, which are their pollinator. The flowers may also be yellow, purple, or blue depending upon variety.

**Fruit** — the seed pod is a capsule which has four grooves and contains many seeds.

**Growth (Cultural) Requirements** — Well-drained sandy soil in full sun with warm temperatures. Seed should be sown when soil temperature is above 65°F. Plants require approximately 100 days to mature.

**Propagation** — directly sown seed when soil is warm

**Folklore** — In Scheherazade's telling of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves in One Thousand and One Arabian Nights the term "open sesame" is used to open up the sealed cave where a group of thieves resides. It is believed that this term is a reference to the fact that a dry sesame seed pod will burst open at the slightest touch.

—In India the seeds are a symbol of immortality in the Hindu religion. (Aggarwal)

—In Assyrian legend, when the gods met to create the world they drank wine made from sesame.

—In Hindu customs, sesame is linked with Maha Sri Devi, consort of Vishnu, and she represents its virtues. It is considered the most auspicious oil next to ghee used in Hindu rituals and prayers. (Wikipedia)



**Chemistry** — Seeds are rich in protein, unsaturated oil, vitamins B<sub>3</sub>, E, folic acid, and minerals, especially calcium (which is notably in a form that is easily absorbed by the body). The seeds are approximately 55% oil, comprising mainly oleic and linoleic acids, and 26% protein. (Chevalier)

**Plant Part(s) Used** — Seeds (mainly), leaves and roots (medicinal)

**Time of Harvest** — Seeds are collected when ripe (seed pods turn brown) and stored whole, pressed for oil, or ground into paste (tahini).

**GRAS?** (generally regarded as safe) — yes

**Medicinal Uses** — The seeds are notable in helping with a variety of health issues – dry cough, poor vision, weak liver and kidneys, osteoporosis, tinnitus, constipation, dental caries, and much more. The leaves have traditionally been used to treat infantile cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, mucus, and cystitis. (Bown)

—A decoction of the root is used in various traditions to treat coughs and asthma. (Chevalier)

—In experiments undertaken using laboratory animals, sesame seeds have been shown to lower blood sugar levels of stored carbohydrates (glycogen). (Chevalier)

—According to Dr. Jim Duke sesame seeds have the highest level of phytosterols, commonly occurring plant compounds that can be absorbed into the bloodstream and help to nudge out cholesterol (or block its absorption), in his plant database. Some other plants high in phytosterols include lettuce, sunflower seeds, hazelnuts, asparagus, okra, spinach, strawberries, squash, tomatoes, and ginger. (Duke)

—It is loaded with lignans such as sesamin and sesamol, a type of phytoestrogen also linked to heart health. (Baggarwal)

—Researchers in Korea found that sesamol, a compound in sesame, could stop the formation of amyloid beta, the protein found in the plaque that riddles the brain of a person with Alzheimer's disease. Sesame "may hold promise in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease," concluded the researcher in Biological and Pharmaceutical Bulletin. (Aggarwal)

—Indian researchers found that a compound prepared from sesame seeds and sesame seed oil sped up wound healing in animals. (Aggarwal)

**Culinary Uses** — The seeds are most commonly toasted before use to enhance flavor. They are commonly used whole in breads, savory dishes, cakes, cookies, and a variety of confections – even molded with a sugary bonding to make a variety of shapes. The seeds are also commonly ground to make a paste called 'tahini', which is a base flavoring for hummus. Tahini is also used in combination with whole sesame or other nuts and honey to make a "sweetmeat" known as "halvah." The seed oil (known as gingelly oil in parts of Asia) is used for cooking and adding flavor to dishes such as stir-fries. It is very popular in Japan and is noted for its long shelf life – it is slow to become rancid. This is likely due to its high content of two antioxidant lignans – sesamol and sesamin. (Simpson and Ogorzaly)

—The black sesame seeds have a more potent taste and are commonly utilized in the cuisines of Southeast Asia.

—Leaves can be eaten in salads and cooked as vegetable greens.

—The seeds are notably high in calories.

—**Warning** – Sesame, like many other seed and nut crops, can trigger an allergic reaction in some people.

**Commercial Production** —The world harvested about 3.84 million metric tons of sesame seeds in 2010. The largest producer of sesame seeds in 2010 was Burma (Myanmar). The world's largest exporter of sesame seeds was India, and Japan the largest importer. (Wikipedia) Other major producers are the Sudan and Nigeria.

—The world harvested 6.2 million metric tons of sesame seeds in 2014, with Tanzania, India, and Sudan as the largest producers (Wikipedia).

- Mexico produces most of the sesame seeds used in the US - a third or which are used on McDonald's sesame seed buns. (Aggarwal)
- Sesame oil is used in the production of margarine, lubricants, soaps, and a variety of pharmaceuticals.
- The residue of oil production is often fed to livestock.

**Other Uses** — The oil is used in both soaps and emollients. It was also historically used as a lamp oil, especially in Egypt and the Near East.

**Sources for Seed or Plants** — There are many sources of seeds and commonly ones purchased commercially for consumption can be used to start crops.

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Submitted by Henry Flowers - October 2017



## A Colorful Little Bit of Latin—Yellow and Orange

In continuing with our look at Latin used in botanical names, here are more words that are used to describe the color of plants (especially of flowers). Let's take a look at the bright, autumnal side of the spectrum:

### Yellow:

<i>aureus</i>	golden
<i>aurosus</i>	golden
<i>canarius</i>	canary yellow
<i>chryseus</i>	golden yellow
<i>citrinus</i>	lemon yellow, citrus
<i>flaveolus</i>	yellowish
<i>flavescens</i>	turning yellow
<i>flavus</i>	bright yellow
<i>icterinus</i>	yellowed, jaundiced
<i>luridus</i>	dirty or smoky yellow
<i>luteolus</i>	yellowish
<i>lutescens</i>	pale yellow
<i>luteus</i>	yellow
<i>ochroleucus</i>	yellowish white, buff
<i>stamineus</i>	straw-colored
<i>sulphureus</i>	sulphur, pale yellow
<i>xanthinus</i>	yellow

### Orange:

<i>aurantiacus</i>	orange
<i>aurorius</i>	orange
<i>croceus</i>	saffron
<i>cupreus</i>	coppery
<i>fulvus</i>	tawny, reddish
<i>ochraeus</i>	ocher

**Yellow is a much more common flower color than is orange—thus there are more descriptive words for yellow flowers.**

Best wishes for a great autumn!  
Henry Flowers, Garden Chair



*Crocus ochroleucus*—  
Fall Crocus



*Alstroemeria aurea*— Peruvian Lily



*Salvia officinalis* 'Icterina'—  
Golden (Jaundiced) Sage



*Mimulus aurantiacus* —  
Marmalade Bush



*Crocus flavus*— Yellow Crocus



*Hemerocallis fulva*— Tawny Daylily



*Melaleuca citrina*— Bottlebrush



*Cosmos sulphureus*— Golden Cosmos

## REQUESTED RECIPE: ROASTED TOMATO MACARONI AND CHEESE

12 oz uncooked elbow macaroni cooked according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

8 plum tomatoes cut into 1/4 inch thick slices

2 Tbsp. olive oil

2 tsp. chopped oregano

1/4 tsp. black pepper

1/4 tsp. kosher salt.

Preheat oven to 450\* F. Place tomato slices on a baking sheet.

Mix next 4 ingredients and pour over tomatoes.

Bake in oven for about 10 minutes and set aside.

2 Tbsp. butter

2 Tbsp. flour

1/2 tsp dry mustard

1 1/2 cups of milk, I used 2%

Melt butter in a saucepan and then whisk in flour and mustard and cook until slightly thickened.

(About 2 minutes)

Whisk in milk and continue whisking until until slightly thickened. (About 4 - 5 minutes)

8 oz. shredded Monterey Jack cheese. (About 2 cups)

3 oz. shredded sharp Cheddar cheese. (About 3/4 cup)

5 oz. shredded Fontina cheese. (About 1 cup)

1/4 tsp Kosher salt

Whisk in cheeses and salt.

Stir in pasta.

Spoon pasta mixture into a lightly greased 2 qt. baking dish. (I used Pam)

Top with tomato slices and pour any oil mixture left in the pan over the top.

Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and back until bubbly at 450\*, about 10 minutes.

I sprinkled with a little more oregano. Serve and enjoy!



Cathy Comiskey

Note: The original was in Southern Living, but the recipe above is what I made for the Pioneer Unit meeting, which had some changes.






# November 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BSG = Botany Study Group CG = Culinary Group	FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden		1 Culinary Group 11:00 to 1:00 Menke House	2 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	3 HerbFest Wimberly 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.	4 South Texas Unit Herb Fair
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 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	17	18
19	20	21 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	22	23 	24	25
26 	27	28 FH Workday 8:30 to noon	29	30 FH Workday 8:30 to noon		

# December 2017

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



## PIONEER PATHS

Volume 25

Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

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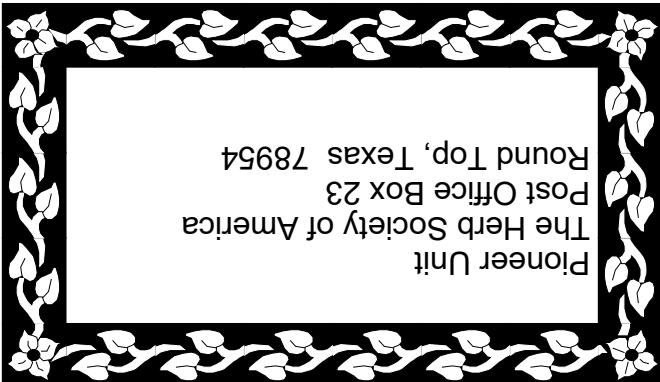
The Mission Statement of The Herb Society of America: "To promote the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs through educational programs, research, and sharing the experience of its members with the community."

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Chair—Karen Cornwall

Vice Chair Programs—Phoebe Lake  
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers  
Treasurer—Lucy Nehrkorn



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