



# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

April 2020

Volume 27, Number 8

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: April 9, 2020 — CANCELLED

Hi All,

Wearing my hat for Programs and hoping to reach out to members to present via ZOOM for April. Our April meeting is cancelled, but there are ways to work around this predicament by using technology.

You can give a short talk on either your favorite herb, container gardening, or landscape ideas. Please contact me if you are interested and are comfortable with Zoom.

Regarding t-shirts, I still have some members' shirts and can send them out if you like, or I can meet you somewhere and/or drop them off. Send an email or give a call to arrange that.

All for now.  
Best to you,  
Kathe Forrest  
Programs Chair

Board Meeting  
(To be arranged)

April 7

Sprouting Grass  
Full Moon

April 24

Arbor Day



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- April 3 — Sally Reynolds
- April 11 — Susan Bame
- April 22 — Ann Allen
- April 24 — Catherine Gardiner
- April 30 — Pat Schmidt



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

How is everyone? That seems trite, but these days common phrases bring us together as we care for one another by asking or saying, "How are you? Staying healthy? Being safe?"

Our wonderful event of the year – The Herb Forum and Plant Sale -- had to be put aside for the well-being of all. A good decision, and I know that I was doubtful but I believe now that it helped others to postpone or cancel their events as well, which may have slowed the contagion down.

However, we were able to sell to our members, and a big Thank You to all who helped with that sale – Karen Cornwell, Susan Yancey, Cammie Beierle, Bev Elam, Jana Rinehart, Henry Flowers, and many others. Much appreciation for being there. Also, thank you to Pat Cox, Cathy Nitsch, Jane Press, Louise Rice, and others at Thyme Well Spent.

The many plants I got (too many of course) helped me to cope as I decide which pots to put them in, where is the best placement, etc.

My garden is thriving this year with tomato plants shooting up, poppies as well. Seems the weather is wonderful and cooperating quite nicely to make things grow.

How are you coping? It's been a joy to see members' gardens on our Listserv, and I hope you will continue to post pictures as time moves on.

For now, we must keep a stiff upper lip as we face this virus adversary.

Here are some suggestions to make life more bearable:

Drive around and view the beautiful wild flowers before they disappear under the weeds.

Work at either Sensory or Festival Hill gardens – these places are quite empty of people and need our "Keep Up" spirit.

Write short postcards or other notes to those who are infirm. There are so many banished to their rooms in Brenham's care homes.

Make face masks. Here is a link: <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-to-make-an-effective-face-mask-at-home-2020-3>

Try your hand at hypertufas – perfect weather for this project.

Venture out into cyberspace and check out the Zoom platform for meetings and visiting with your loved ones.

I will end by saying Take Good Care wherever and whatever you do until we meet again.

Kathe Forrest  
Board Chair



Kathe's Garden



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING  
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA - PIONEER UNIT  
MARCH 12, 2020

Kathe Forrest, Chair, opened the meeting by talking about the research she has been doing on coronavirus in light of the upcoming Herbal Forum. Kathe has talked to officials from Washington County and various health organizations. She told members about a real-time map of coronavirus cases in the U.S. and will send that website to members. Extensive discussion followed on the pros and cons of cancelling the Herbal Forum and the possibility of having the plant and gift shop sales if the Forum was cancelled; this option was not deemed feasible. Henry Flowers emphasized the need for a prompt decision in order to cancel those plant orders that could be cancelled and so that Festival Hill could inform registrants. Festival Hill has already received 10-15 cancellations.

During the meeting Henry received an email from Gayle Engels, one of the Forum speakers, saying that she would not be able to attend as she did not want to fly. Cathy Nitsch, Publicity, would need to call various newspapers, magazines, and groups who have been publicizing Forum so that they could run cancellation notices.

Karen Cornwell, plant sale chair, spoke briefly about plant sale set-up.

Kathe said members' tee-shirts are ready to be picked up and paid for.

Georgia Sowers, Vice Chair Membership, welcomed visitor Joanna Hagler and new members Sally Reynolds and Sandra Dudley who received their badges.

Pam Traylor reminded members to give her the sign-up form for Forum lunches.

After the meeting, the Board met to discuss whether to cancel Forum. In light of the speaker cancellation, the possibility of further speaker cancellations and registrant cancellations, and strong feelings from some members, the Board reluctantly voted to cancel Herbal Forum 2020.

This decision was made known to the Unit. Work continued on shop items in preparation for a members-only plant and gift shop sale to be held at Festival Hill on Thursday, March 19th, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch in the Menke House at noon.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Cox  
Secretary



## PLANT SALE

The 2020 Forum was cancelled, but we had a couple of deliveries in the woks that were not feasible to cancel. We held a membership sale on Thursday, March 19th.

Bargain prices were a temptation to many, but we were all being careful and took the necessary precautions. We sold many plants, but the bottom line is unknown at this time. Given the circumstances, we will be grateful if we break even.

Special thanks to all the volunteers who helped unload on Monday or helped with the membership sale. We simply would have been unable to manage without you. Thanks so much.

Karen Cornwell, Susan Yancey, Jana Rinehart

## THYME WELL SPENT

A huge thank-you to all who contributed to the shop for Forum 2020 by making items or manning the members sale. The shop has recouped its expenses, and we will have more sales when things get less crazy. Stitched items can be saved for next year (which will give our tireless sewers a break!). You are all very much appreciated.

Pat Cox and Jane Press

## CULINARY GROUP

The April meeting has been cancelled. A decision about the May meeting will be made at a later date.

Belinda Weatherly

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

I wish all of you a blessed and safe Easter with your friends, families, and loved ones! Our March Forum Prep Unit Meeting was somber with the cancellation of Forum and Plant Sale 2020 due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Prospective active member Joanna Hagler was in attendance for her third visit. Our two newest members, Sally Reynolds and Sandra Dudley, were introduced and welcomed to the Pioneer Unit and received their new member badges.

I had the pleasure of meeting Sally Reynolds during the outdoor luncheon at Menke House when she was attending Forum 2019, and I invited her to attend our meetings. We discussed her desire to volunteer in the Festival Hill Gardens. She and her husband Norman live in Round Top, Texas, with a P.O. Box 246, Round Top 78954-0246 mail address. Her cell is (713) 503-9410 and email is [sr@sallyreynolds.com](mailto:sr@sallyreynolds.com). Sally's membership with HSA is effective July 15, 2019, and her birthday is April 3. Her contact information will be in the next print of yearbook for 2020-2021; you may update your current copies. WELCOME Sally, we are happy to have you on board!

Kay Von Minden invited her daughter Sandra Dudley to our Unit, and she and her husband live at 128 County Road 314, Rockdale, Texas 76567-5152. Her cell phone is (512) 221-3135 and her email address is [skdudley2009@gmail.com](mailto:skdudley2009@gmail.com). Sandra's membership is effective on March 12, 2020, and her birthday is June 16. Her contact information will be in the next print of yearbook for 2020-2021, and you may update your current copies. WELCOME Sandra, and we are happy you have joined us!

We will miss having our April Unit Meeting but will be able to stay in touch via email and on the Pioneer Unit Discussion Group at [pioneerherbs@groups.io](mailto:pioneerherbs@groups.io), as well as on the Facebook page at Pioneer Unit Herb Society of America (Texas).

The Pioneer Unit Renewal Form is in the newsletter, and members can print and fill it in, scan a copy and email to [gzsowers@att.net](mailto:gzsowers@att.net). You may also access the Renewal Form for 2020-2021 on the website at [herbsocietypioneer.org](http://herbsocietypioneer.org). Just click the Members Tab and scroll down to the Renewal Form. You may USPS your Renewal Form with the annual dues payable to HSA Pioneer Unit of \$67 for individual or \$98 for joint memberships to Membership Chair Georgia Sowers at 607 Ross Street, Brenham Texas 77833-2764. NOTE for all new members who joined the Unit prior to July 1, 2020, and paid their pro-rated dues: you will be up for renewal at the regular rates shown above. Please note the Program Recommendations and Field Trip Recommendations areas midway and the Comments, Recommendations, and Suggestions at the lower end of the Renewal Form if you have anything of interest to be considered. Membership forwards these to the Programs Chair, the Special Events Co-Chairs, as well as the Chair(s) who help with Workshops, and possibly the Chair and Past Chair for consideration.

Although we had to do without the Forum and Plant Sale to earn volunteer hours, there are still many areas for members to volunteer. Henry Flowers sent this information to the listserv recently, and Membership emails these posts to the prospective active members who need to fulfill their required hours at the gardens, as well as with the various Workshops. Thank you to everyone for your loyal and concerted efforts, and Membership is grateful for your steady

reporting of your hours (email is the best way). You may photocopy your hours and text to Georgia Sowers (281) 486-6006. It would be helpful to copy Membership Assistant Diana Sellers at [sellers2000@yahoo.com](mailto:sellers2000@yahoo.com); her cell for text is (512) 461-7175.

If you have any questions or comments about Membership, please contact me or Diana so we can help guide you. I hope everyone will enjoy a nice spring and have plenty of success in your gardens. Please all keep SAFE. I hope we will be able to meet in May.

Herbally Easter,  
Georgia Sowers



Working at the Sensory Garden



**\*\*NEW ACTIVE MEMBERS\*\*****Sandra Dudley**, in her own words:

My interest in herbs and gardening started at a young age. My mother taught me the love of gardening. With her help and encouragement, I attended several meetings over the years. Each meeting has been informative and has furthered my knowledge and desire to learn more. I look forward to many more years.

**Sally Reynolds:**

Sally and her husband Norman are involved with career-type activities, herself with many volunteer activities in different capacities and he in his law business. She has a storied background in the arts and literature fields. Learning more about herbs and their medicinal values, as well as culinary and decorative values, will be useful to her. Sally enjoys helping out at the meetings and is looking forward to furthering her knowledge of herbs and interacting with the members.





# HSA PIONEER UNIT MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION

*Due May 1*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday (Month/Day): \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Category**

- Active - single \$67/ joint \$98     Life – single \$12/ joint \$18
- Affiliate (Unit or Member-at-Large) - single \$12/ joint \$18

(Make check payable to HSA-Pioneer Unit and give to Membership Chair at meeting or Mail to HSA-Pioneer Unit, ATTN: Membership, P O Box 23, Round Top TX 78954)

Program Recommendations:

Field Trip Recommendations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please check accordingly: I  HAVE or  HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE REQUIRED 20 VOLUNTEER HOURS  
Active Members: HOW DO YOU PREFER TO FULFILL YOUR REQUIRED 20 VOLUNTEER HOURS?

- Working in any Unit-sponsored garden, such as Festival Hill or Brenham ISD, and any other Unit-approved garden, or seed cleaning
- Herbal Forum at Round Top and Forum preparation throughout year supporting efforts pertaining to preparation of items, such as Thyme Well Spent Shoppe, as well as mail outs, packets, and plant sale preps
- Hosting at a meeting, including a.m. refreshments, setup/cleanup, decorating, serving lunch, including Angel duties
- Educational activities for promoting the knowledge, use, and delight of herbs, such as presentations (including a/v), research articles for newsletter (up to 4 hours prep), participation in education events
- Unit administration, such as hours spent performing duties as Officer or Unit Board of Directors member, maintaining or updating Unit scrapbook, sending greeting cards to Unit members
- Other approved activities as the Board of Directors may approve after review. We can work with you to find volunteer opportunities.

**WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS:**

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(Please utilize another sheet if necessary)

## The History and Mystery of Herbs – Herbal Antivirals

With everyone's attention so focused on the coronavirus Covid-19, I thought it would be interesting to look into medicinal herbs that have antiviral activity. While there is likely no research yet on the effectiveness of any herb against this specific virus, there is research into how chemicals derived from a variety of herbs can have effects in combating viruses.

One of the best books that I have ever come across on this subject is Herbal Antivirals: Natural Remedies for Emerging & Resistant Viral Infections by Stephen Harrod Buhner (Mr. Buhner has also authored a companion book Herbal Antibiotics). This very informative book discusses how viruses can spread and the mechanisms they can use to invade and affect the body. It covers respiratory viruses, encephalitis viruses and others such as dengue and shingles. Yet the main focus of the book is plants that have shown effectiveness in either preventing viral infections or helping to cure them.

Dr. Buhner's top seven antiviral herbs are: Chinese skullcap – *Scutellaria baicalensis*; Elder – *Sambucus nigra*; Ginger – *Zingiber officinale*; Houttuynia – *Houttuynia cordata*; Woad – *Isatis tinctoria*; Licorice – *Glycyrrhiza glabra*; and Cough Root – *Lomatium dissectum*. I have grown every one of these plants at one time or another, and they will all grow here (to varying degrees).

Chinese skullcap is a small shrubby plant with rich purple flowers, not too dissimilar in appearance to our native pink skullcap – *Scutellaria suffrutescens*. The part used for medicinal purposes is the roots and they must be at least three years old to be sufficiently effective. It is a broad-spectrum antiviral, having many possible modes of action and, according to the author, is one of the most effective in general and also has many other effects beyond being antiviral. As an antiviral it is effective against many viruses. A few of those are: adenovirus (3 and 7), hepatitis (A, B and C), herpes simplex, HIV-1, influenza (A and B), measles, and SARS coronavirus. Another aspect of note is that this herb is "synergist – a plant that, when used with other medicinal substances (herbs, supplements or pharmaceuticals), through a variety of mechanisms, increases the potency of those substances against microbial pathogens."

Two herbs which have been the focus of former Herbal Forums are elder and ginger. With elder, the fruits are the most commonly used part, but the flowers, leaves, bark and roots also have uses. Although elder is effective against a wide variety of viruses, and also bacteria, for this discussion it is most notably effective against influenza, especially when combined with zinc. The berries are often made into a tincture or syrup, but occasionally decoctions of the berries, stem bark and leaves are made into even more potent combinations.

Ginger rhizomes are an effective antiviral if used fresh. Evidently the drying process causes ginger to lose most of its medicinal effectiveness. The author promotes the crushing and juicing of the rhizomes to get the most potent effect. The following statement sums up the medicinal use of ginger: "Ginger is best thought of in the following way: as a respiratory antiviral circulatory stimulant that will calm nausea, reduce diarrhea and stomach cramping, reduce fever (by stimulating sweating), reduce cold chills, reduce inflammation in bronchial passageways, thin mucus and help it move out of the system, reduce coughing (as much as codeine cough syrups), ameliorate anxiety, and provide analgesic relief equal to or better than ibuprofen." It is also, like Chinese skullcap, a synergist.

Houttuynia is a spreading perennial from Southeast Asia, with vigor similar to that of mint. It spreads rapidly in moist soils and can become a pest, but it is highly medicinal. The leaves and roots are most often made into a tincture for use as a broad spectrum antiviral, fighting viruses such as influenza A, SARS coronavirus, dengue and more.

I think that by now you are getting the picture that these herbs are quite medicinally potent and that they deserve much respect. Woad, licorice and cough root deserve just as much attention as the ones I've already devoted space to. If you want to learn more about them, I suggest procuring a copy of this book by Mr. Buhner.

In addition to these medicinal herbs (of which ginger and possibly elder are the only ones often used for culinary pursuits), there are many culinary herbs which exhibit antiviral effects. Oregano contains carvacrol, which has shown effectiveness against murine norovirus, herpes simplex 1, rotavirus and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Sage, holy basil (tulsi), fennel, garlic, lemon balm, peppermint and rosemary are other culinary herbs which have shown a variety of antiviral and other medicinal effects.

Another topic that Mr. Buhner discusses is adding certain items to the diet in order to boost immunity. He recommends yogurt (or kefir); oats and barley; garlic; selenium –rich foods such as Brazil nuts, fish, sunflower seed, meats, eggs, mushrooms and more (one Brazil nut a day may be the best source of selenium); chicken soup; black and green teas; zinc-containing foods such as oysters, wheat germ, liver, seeds (such as sesame, pumpkin and watermelon), dark chocolate, peanuts, garlic and chickpeas; ginger; broccoli (and other cruciferous vegetables); red bell peppers (very high in vitamin C); and oregano.

Another of my favorite books relating to herbs and medicine is Healing Spices by Dr. Bharat Aggarwal, a well-respected cancer researcher. In this book he relates how a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, spices and herbs is the best means to prevent and treat many medicinal issues. By daily incorporation of spices and herbs into your diet you can boost your immunity and help to prevent a variety of illnesses or lessen their effects. His argument is basically that the best way to use spices and herbs for medicinal purposes is to incorporate them into your daily diet, not just to go to them when you have issues.

I want to stress that I am not a trained medicinal herbalist and that I'm offering this information out of interest. I urge you to consult with your physician before relying on any herb for medicinal use and especially take into account that many herbs are synergists and thus can possibly enhance the actions of other medication or other herbs, which can lead to complications. Chances are that you, like me, having an interest in culinary herbs, use them often in your kitchen. Using them in variety and in moderation is generally a safe practice and the amounts most often used in foods are safe.

While there continues to be great uncertainty in the world in relation to the Covid-19 coronavirus, I hope that you and your families will all stay safe and healthy. Use this time as a chance to get more in touch with your garden or to share your love of gardening with family or friends with whom you can safely interact. Perhaps you can also take time to simply sit in the garden and admire the birds and insects it attracts or dust off a book you have put off reading and sit in a comfy chair on the porch or patio and delve into its pages.

*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.*

Best wishes always,  
Henry Flowers  
HSA Pioneer Unit Past Chair



## HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA NOTES

One of the most valuable member's benefits HSA offers is the reciprocal admissions program. HSA is a member of the American Horticultural Society. As an HSA member, you have special admission privileges and discounts at 330+ AHS gardens throughout North America! Show your HSA membership card to receive free or discounted admission to gardens, arboretum, gift shops, and special exhibits. Now, while many public botanical gardens and arboretums are closed, you can enjoy virtual tours, demonstrations, videos, and fly overs. [You might have received an email from HSA that included a link for virtual tours, but I could not copy that link and make it active — a failure of this newsletter editor, I fear. Use your favorite internet search engine and look for "virtual garden tours" — there are many available.]

By now, you are probably aware that the annual meeting of the members has been cancelled.

HSA headquarters staff is here to answer your questions and provide information during the stay at home period. Please contact us via email and we will be happy to help:

Laura Lee Martin, Executive Director [director@herbsociety.org](mailto:director@herbsociety.org)

Karen Kennedy, Educator [educator@herbsociety.org](mailto:educator@herbsociety.org)

Cheryl Skibicki, Membership and Development [membership@herbsociety.org](mailto:membership@herbsociety.org)


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# WASH YOUR HANDS



# April 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HG = Horticultural Study Group		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Pioneer Unit Meeting CANCELLED	10	11
12 	13	14	15 HG Festival Hill 9:30-11:30 CANCELLED	16 HSA Annual Meeting CANCELLED	17 HSA Annual Meeting CANCELLED	18
19 Newsletter Deadline lrowlett@gmail.com	20	21	22	23	24	25 South Texas Unit Herb Day CANCELLED
26	27	28	29	30		

# May 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory	HG = Horticultural Study Group				1 	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting	15	16
17 Newsletter Deadline lrowlett@gmail.com	18	19	20 HG Festival Hill 9:30-11:30	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 						



## PIONEER PATHS

Volume 27

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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—Kathe Forrest

Vice Chair Programs—Kathe Forrest  
Secretary—Pat Cox

Vice Chair Membership—Georgia Sowers  
Treasurer—Janie Plummer

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