



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

February 2021

Volume 28, Number 6

February 2
Ground Hog Day



February 14
Valentine's Day



February 15
Presidents' Day



February 27
Snow Full Moon



MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: February 11, 2021

Time: 10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting

Location: This meeting will be held on Zoom. Look for the link to the meeting on our listserv.

Directions: You have only to turn on your computer or other internet device, click on the Zoom link, and watch the presentation.
There may be an opportunity to participate in the meeting after the presentation. A video of the meeting may be available if you miss the original presentation or just want to watch the rerun. The Zoom link will be available on the listserv.

Program: Houston Botanic Garden

Speaker: Marilyn Ventura

Visit hbg.org where you can sign up to receive the Botanic Garden's newsletter.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This time last year we were all excited about the March Forum and Plant sale. The Corona virus had not really lodged in our brains, and we had not considered what it fully meant for us not only as individuals but as families, groups, and our Herb Society.

Here we are now full circle and planning once more for a sale, but on a smaller scale and only for family and friends. I am still really looking forward to participating in the "goings on" and buying fresh herbs as many of mine went under with the one and only truly cold snap so far.

The weather today is amazing - this is Tuesday the 26th as I write.

I know that this sale will up our game on an online presence and learning curve too as we list and process for a different kind of interaction in online selling.

Please bear with the Plant Sale Committee as they are doing their best to help us keep our community presence and achieve and accomplish a safe Plant Sale for our members.

I hope to see you all at the next meeting!

Kathe Forrest
Pioneer Unit Chair



February Birthdays

- February 3 — Tony Scanapico
- February 17 — Barbara Solis
- February 20 — Bonnie Lout
- February 21 — Janie Cornelius and Mary Sockwell
- February 22 — Sara Holland

FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

Hi All!

Well, spring is just around the corner and things are looking sunnier on the COVID-19 front too. Perhaps in the not too distant future we will be able to meet in person once again. In the meantime, our February meeting will again be via Zoom.

The Houston Botanic Garden is a new project for the Houston area. It recently opened in southeast Houston. Imagine a 132-acre "living museum" incorporating nature trails and beautiful themed gardens.

From the website the garden's purpose is:

"Enriching life through discovery, education, and the conservation of plants and the natural environment."

Marilyn Ventura, the horticulturist assistant responsible for upkeep of the Culinary Garden at the Botanic Garden, will be our speaker for February.

I look forward to hearing about this fantastic garden and then visiting it as soon as possible. Hope you do too!

Kathe will once again send out a Zoom link on our listserv.

Phoebe Lake
Programs Chair

.....

**: Enjoy visiting gardens? Feeling organized after months of
: lockdown? Do I have a job for you!**

**: It has occurred to me that several of our past or future speakers
: are connected with a public garden or nursery. These are all
: places we can begin to think about visiting — gardens are always
: good for lifting our spirits! What we need is someone to organize
: trips. Like everything else these field trips will look a bit different
: than in the past. Most venues now need reservations, and
: carpooling will be limited, but it can be done.**

**: If you are interested in helping plan trips in the future, please
: contact Phoebe Lake, Programs Chair.**

.....

MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT

January 14, 2021

Kathe Forest, Chair, welcomed all members attending via Zoom.

Phoebe Lake, Programs Chair, introduced the speaker, Bee Holleran of Flora Cocina. Bee spoke about edible flowers. Her company does catering and sells gourmet gifts, all about plant-based flower food for your table. Bee spoke of the joys of seeing people light up when they see the flowers as they step in to one of her catered events. She mentioned many flowers in her talk, what types to forage or purchase, what to look for, and how best to harvest. Chalk this up to another fun speaker! Reminder: if anyone wants to listen or re-listen, check out the replay on the list serv. You can find Bee at www.floracocina.com.

Susan Yancey, Plant Sale, updated us on the decisions regarding the Plant Sale. The sale will be a friends and family event, sister units, and maybe marginally to the public. There will be a pre-order email going out in February. Susan has asked for anyone who wants to volunteer to contact her or Jana Rinehart. They also want a volunteer who is proficient with computers to help with the payments via online. The dates for the sale are March 18, 19, and 20, 2021.

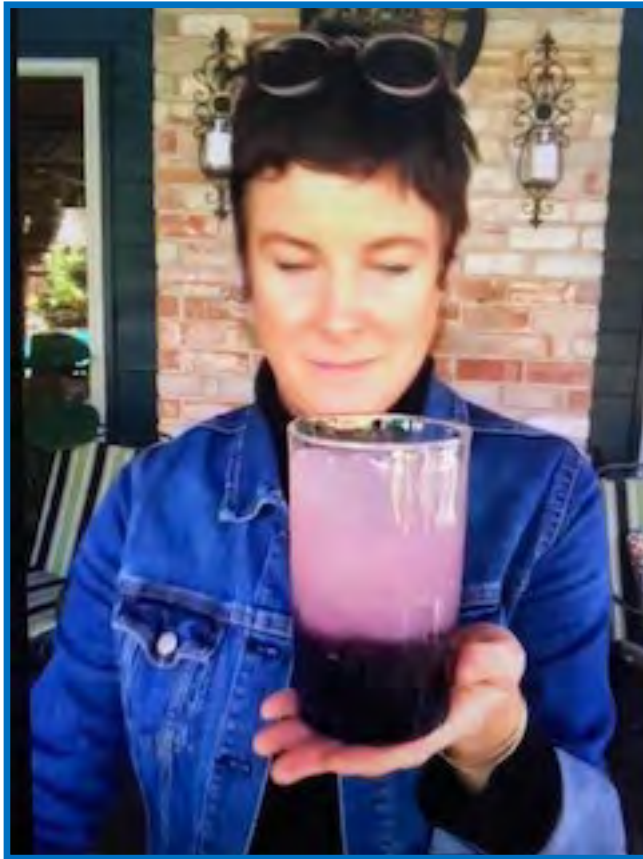
Cathy Nitsch, Thyme Well Spent, updated us by noting that anyone making jams, jellies, or mustards can stop. There will probably be some pre-order items for Thyme Well Spent in conjunction with the Plant Sale. Cammie Beierle asked if any more spices were needed, and the answer was no. Belinda Weatherly, Culinary, has made mustards and will have mustards available for sale.

Julie Fordes, South Texas Unit Chair, was attending our Zoom meeting. She mentioned that the South Texas Unit sent out a survey to their members and are planning for a Fall Herb Symposium in Houston.

Madeline Johnson, Horticultural Study Group, said they will be starting the new study on basil on January 28th. All are encouraged to join and learn! She mentioned there will be basil plants available for those who choose to study with the Study Group.

Kathe Forrest then closed the meeting and thanked all for coming.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Yates, Secretary



Bee Holleran demonstrates the magic of flowers in drinks and food.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Happy February Everyone!

I have just discovered that February is a truly fascinating month. It is full of important month-long observances and has a robust number of joyous holidays. The general theme of February seems to revolve around love, kindness, gentleness, thinking of others, and having a really good time. Here are some of the interesting observances I found associated with February:

January 30th — April 4th — Season for Non-violence (International Observance)

February

American Heart Month

Black History Month

National Bird-feeding Month (my bird visitors are all for that)

First Saturday – Ice Cream for Breakfast Day (I think we should all meet at the Blue Bell Creamery)

February 9 – National Pizza Day

February 14 – Valentine's Day

February 17 – Random Acts of Kindness Day

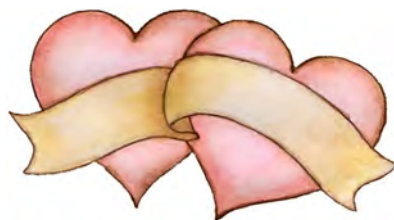
February 20 – World Day of Social Justice

I love this month! In honor of the love of February, I encourage each member to reach out and connect with another member whom you haven't seen or heard from in a while. Random acts of kindness can make someone's day.

Unfortunately, our struggle with COVID continues to cause havoc in our lives and our unit operations. Our last two meetings have been Zoom only due to a recent surge in infections and hospitalizations, but the programs have been great. Kathe records them, so if you aren't able to attend the "live" meeting, please view the recorded version. Then give yourself credit for attending the meeting. Our January meeting featured Bee Holleran who presented "Flora Cocina," a delicious discussion of edible flowers. Thirty-six attended this Zoom meeting. Five of the attendees were visitors from the South Texas Unit.

Also, due to the ongoing struggle for members to earn the required 20 volunteer hours this year, the Pioneer Unit Board approved a proposal to waive the requirement for this year. While all contributions are greatly appreciated, we don't want any member to worry that they won't be able to re-join for next year due to issues with volunteer hours. Please continue recording any volunteer hours you have performed in the Pioneer Unit's Track It Forward app so all the great work that has been accomplished can be recognized. So far, since July 1, 2020, 957 volunteer hours have been recorded in Track It Forward. Thanks to everyone for all their hard work.

Diana Sellers
Membership Chair



MARCH 2021 PLANT SALE for MEMBERS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILY

The annual plant sale will be here before we know it! The plant sale committee explored options for taking the plant sale to the web, but going virtual turned out to be an expensive, unwieldy option.

It is still important to keep everyone safe and healthy in the pandemic. This year's plant sale will be different in many aspects. For example, in-person browsing and shopping will not be allowed. Shoppers will complete and return an order form. Orders will be picked up Thursday March 18, Friday March 19, and Saturday March 20 via a drive-through on Festival Hill grounds.

There will not be the profusion of plant varieties and Thyme Well Spent Shoppe (TWSS) gift items the sale is famous for. The 2021 sale will have herbs, tomatoes, peppers, and twenty different TWSS items.

There will not be roses, landscape annuals, shrubs, trees or a Gazebo with hypertufa potted succulents. But we still have 5,000 plants to sell.

General information and the pre-order form will be mailed to members during the first week of February. The form will also be posted on the Pioneer Unit website.

Please copy and share the order form with your friends and family. We are encouraging all members to set a personal goal for the sale of 50 plants each.

Susan Yancey and Jana Rinehart
2021 Plant Sale Co-chairs



HORTICULTURAL STUDY GROUP The Promiscuous Basil

Tucker and DeBaggio in The Big Book of Herbs used the above phrase in talking about basil. Why? Well, basil is notorious cross-pollinator. Apparently, they never met a basil that they didn't like. So those seeds you save from your Genovese Basil may or may not be Genovese next year, if you had other basil nearby. The species *Ocimum basilicum*, which we lovingly call sweet basil, has spawned dozens of cultivars, including Purple Ruffles, Lettuce Leaf, Siam Queen, and Mexican Spice. So you can see from this short list that we have benefitted greatly from basil's promiscuous tendencies. The Horticulture Study Group will be studying basil in 2021. Each group member will be growing at least six types. Although we haven't finalized the list yet, the contenders include Sweet Genovese, Sweet Dani, Spicy Globe, Thai, Wild Magic, Cardinal, and Kapur. We will try to keep our basil from being too promiscuous, but then again -- where's the fun in that?



Madeline Johnson


CULINARY GROUP




The Culinary Group continues to meet the first Wednesday of the month via zoom. We are completing making mustards for sale during the upcoming plant sale. The February meeting will focus on two of the herbs in the family Apiaceae, caraway and celery.

Belinda Weatherly

February 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 CG	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Unit Meeting on Zoom	12	13
14 	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 HG 10-noon	26	27
28					CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HG = Horticultural Study Group

March 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 CG	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 No Unit Meeting	12	13
14	15	16	17 	18 Members Plant Sale	19 Members Plant Sale	20 Members Plant Sale
21	22	23	24	25 HG 10-noon	26	27
28	29	30	31		CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HG = Horticultural Study Group



PIONEER PATHS

Volume 28

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—Kathe Forrest

Vice Chair Programs—Phoebe Lake
Secretary—Lori Yeats

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers
Treasurer—Debi Thomas

As Diana Sellers mentioned in her Membership article, February is important for many reasons. In fact, in addition to the month-long food celebrations, every day in February has a food association, with many dates having two, so you can choose your celebratory food:

February 1: National Baked Alaska Day
February 2: (France): Crêpes Day
February 2: Heavenly Hash Day
February 3: National Carrot Cake Day
February 3: National Tater Tot Day
February 4: Homemade Soup Day
February 4: National Stuffed Mushrooms Day
February 5: National Chocolate Fondue Day
February 5: World Nutella Day
February 6: National Chopsticks Day
February 6: National Frozen Yogurt Day
February 7: National Fettuccine Alfredo Day
February 8: National Molasses Bar Day
February 9: National Bagels and Lox Day
February 9: National Pizza Day
February 10: Cream Cheese Brownie Day
February 11: Peppermint Patty Day
February 11: Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk Day
February 12: National Plum Pudding Day
February 13: National Tortellini Day
February 14: National Creme-Filled Chocolates Day
February 14: National Clementine Day
February 15: National Gumdrop Day
February 16: National Almond Day
February 17: National Indian Pudding Day
February 18: Crab-Stuffed Flounder Day

February 18: Drink Wine Day
February 19: National Chocolate Mint Day
February 20: National Cherry Pie Day
February 20: National Muffin Day
February 21: National Sticky Bun Day
February 22: National Margarita Day
February 23: National Banana Bread Day
February 23: National Toast Day
February 23: Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day
February 24: National Tortilla Chip Day
February 25: National Clam Chowder Day
February 25: National Chocolate-Covered Nuts Day
February 26: National Pistachio Day
February 27: National Protein Day
February 27: National Strawberry Day
February 27: National Kahlua Day
February 28: National Chocolate Soufflé Day
February 29: National Frogs Legs Day
February 29: National Surf and Turf Day

Read more at: <http://www.thenibble.com/fun/more/facts/holidays-february.asp>