



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

July 4
Independence Day



—
July 23
Thunder Full Moon

July 2021

Volume 28, Number 11

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: July 8, 2021
- Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting
- Location: Brenham Presbyterian Church
900 South Jackson Street
- Directions: Exit Highway 290 to Business 36 North (Day Street) into Brenham. Continue north to College Street. Turn left to Jackson Street, and the church will be on your left.
- Program: All About Oregano
- Speaker: Oregano Horticulture Study Group



IMPORTANT NOTE: Notify Patty Mills, Hospitality Chair, if you will attend the meeting and want a box lunch and whether you want vegetarian, chicken salad, or turkey wrap. The cost of the lunch is \$10.00, payable at the meeting. You may email Patty at pattymills67@gmail.com

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings from Taylor, Texas!

Yes, it is very hot here as well. Yesterday I planted daisies and cosmos given to me from a new gardening friend because she was thinning. I hope that they survive.

The Pharmacy Garden is being well taken care of thanks to those who have been venturing out in this heat and to Henry Flowers and others volunteering. Henry reports that he did set up a timer for watering, and we on the Board will review his proposal for an irrigation upgrade. The Board will also be discussing the Festival Hill gardens situation.

If you did not see the Face Book post with the before and after pictures from the Sensory Garden, check those out or I can send them on the Listserv. Better yet, go and visit our gardens – no work, just sit in the shade, have a picnic or enjoy your coffee.

All for now,

Kathe Forrest
Chair

P.S. Taylor is known for its ducks, and frequently I have a couple of visitors in my yard.



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

The Horticulture Study Group had its first meeting in January of 2020. What a time to begin a new venture! However, the group was able to meet in person and then via Zoom with the goal of studying one herb in depth. The first herb was Oregano, and each member of the group grew several different varieties throughout the year.

Well, the results of that study are in! These results will be presented as our June program. It was a true learning experience for all involved, and they are eager to share their new found knowledge of this wonderful herb.

As a special treat, we will be taste testing the Oreganos used in the study.

We will meet at Brenham Presbyterian Church on July 8 with meet and greet from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. The program will begin at 10:00 followed by a boxed lunch. The cost of the lunch is \$10. Please respond to Patty Mills with your choice of lunch.

Should be fun!

Phoebe Lake
Programs Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
June 10, 2021

Kathe Forrest opened the meeting at Burton Church in Burton, Texas. She asked Phoebe Lake, Programs Chair, to introduce the speaker.

Phoebe introduced Deena Spellman of Bastrop Botanical Gardens. Deena has been in the industry for over 20 years and is a sought-after speaker in Central Texas. She was raised in Barbados and has a wealth of culinary information, as she grew up in her family's Italian restaurant. She started her talk, giving homage to the power of our Elders and all they can teach us, adding that health and medicine begins with plants. Deena was fun and a joy to listen to!

After the talk, there were door prizes, and the members got to purchase herbs Deena brought with her. Then we enjoyed a box lunch.

Kathe then opened the business meeting. The main topic was the proposed agreement the Board is working on for our relationship with Festival Hill. There was much discussion on the state of the gardens, what we would be responsible for, what is Festival Hill's vision and their part in taking care of the gardens, how to possibly get volunteers from nearby High Schools or organizations where young people are, and possible coordinators for the different areas of the gardens. There were many good suggestions and ideas to put towards the agreement and items to ask Lamar Lentz for verification.

Kathe then announced and presented pins for years of membership in the Herb Society of America to members.

Diana Sellers, Membership Chair, reminded everyone that membership renewal is needed in the next few weeks. She stated there were 4 guests who were at the meeting and want to join.

Cammie Beierle, Membership, reminded all to use the Track It Forward app.

Cathy Kietlinski, Sensory Garden Chair, reported that the Sensory Garden is flourishing. The pear trees are bearing, and the cone flowers are beautiful. She also mentioned that if any new members need volunteer hours, she is happy to meet them at the Sensory Garden to start that process.

Joanna Hagler, Pharmacy Garden, thanked all who signed up to work at the Pharmacy Garden. She will be forwarding the email that Henry Flowers sent out about the garden.

Phoebe then announced that next month's meeting will be at Brenham Presbyterian Church. The meeting was adjourned.

Lori Yeats
Secretary

JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 3 — Mary Reeves

July 9 — Marcella Ausmus

July 26 — Wanda Hubbard

July 29 — Royceanna Kendall



Sweet Bay Magnolia
Photo by Phoebe Lake



I was not able to reach Mary Reeves (July 3), but I found a picture in my collection showing Mary teaching a group of us herbies how to make grapevine wreaths. Mary is always ready to share her knowledge.
—Editor

Wanda Hubbard (July 26) sent this photograph of her beautiful orchid vine. She mentioned that she has had the plant for ten years. Wanda noted that she enjoys being a member of the Pioneer Unit. She said she bought her first herb book in May 1976 and that she has obtained many more since then.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The June Pioneer Meeting was a riot of members having a wonderful time, meeting in person, and visiting and enjoying the company of other members they hadn't seen in a while. In addition to our Active members attending, four Affiliate members were in attendance. There were also four prospective members present: Kathy Young (with husband Dale), guest of Betty Pior, was attending for her 2nd visit; Robin Schill, Patty Brown (guest of Kathe Forrest), and Cathy Ingram (guest of Cammie Beierle) were attending for the first time. All expressed an interest in becoming members of the Pioneer Unit. Welcome to all! We look forward to you becoming members.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL PROCESS

Many Active and Affiliate members handed in their Membership Renewal forms during the meeting. Thanks to everyone for completing that process. Some contact information has changed. The process of updating the Membership Directory will begin soon with the goal to begin printing in late August.

By the time you receive your July Pioneer Paths newsletter, the Pioneer Unit's new fiscal year will have started. New beginnings hold the promise of exciting times ahead, and I know everyone looks forward to attending our programs in person, sharing gardening knowledge, and bringing all those delicious homecooked dishes to share with each other. Now that we are back to a more normal situation, relative to COVID, we will re-implement the rules regarding completing 20 hours of volunteer time and attending at least 3 meetings during this upcoming year.

VOLUNTEER WORK

Due to the Pandemic, with the inability to gather for many months, then the Big Freeze hitting us so hard, volunteer hours are down this year compared to past years. We still ended up with a phenomenal number of hours. Our members have proven once again to be a super, hard-working group, as always. I don't have the final count yet, as members continue to record their hours in Track It Forward through June 30th, but the number of hours is in the range of 1,850 to 1,900 hours. Great job!!

Track It Forward has been successful this year as a method for members to record their own hours. If you haven't started using it to track your own hours, please contact me (Diana at sellers2000@yahoo.com) or Cammie Beierle at cammie@cameliafarm.com . We'll be happy to help you get started.

Herbally Yours,
Diana Sellers
Membership Chair

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

June 24 was a feast for the palette as well as the eyes. Cammie Beierle's B&B was the location of our meeting, and both her garden and her bed and breakfast are beautiful. Diana Sellers, Sally Reynolds, and Joann Reichle prepared basil-loaded beverages and snacks as part of their presentation on Baking with Basil. This sentence from their handout says it all: "If summer had a flavor, it would taste like basil." Basils contain alcohols, terpenes, aldehydes, ketones and phenols. The various combinations of these essential oils give each variety of basil its distinctive smell and taste. Basil flavors range from fruity (i.e. Sweet Genovese) to peppery (i.e. Siam Queen). Flavors can be mild as in the Sweet Lemon Basil to intense as in the Holy Basils.



A few tips when baking or cooking with basil:

Use non-reactive cookware whenever possible.

Cook fresh basil only briefly to retain its flavors.

If a recipe calls for 1 cup packed basil leaves, chopped, then measure leaves before you chop.

If a recipe calls for 1 cup coarsely chopped basil leaves, then chop before measuring.

Dried basil is usually a poor substitute for fresh basil.

Grow more basil. You can't have too many basil plants during the summer.

Try the following lemonade recipe. You'll be glad that you did.

Lemonade with Lemon Basil*

6 lemons

2 quarts of water

1 cup of sugar

1 lemon, thinly sliced with seeds removed

Lemon-basil ice cubes

Sprigs of lemon basil for garnish

Squeeze the juice from the lemons. Bring the water to a boil and stir in the sugar until dissolved. Add the lemon juice. Stir well. Add the lemon slices.

Let cool to room temperature and then refrigerate until ready to serve. Fill the glasses with lemon-basil ice cubes. Fill with lemonade and add a sprig of lemon basil for garnish.

*from [Basil: An Herb Lover's Guide](#) by Thomas DeBaggio & Susan Belsinger.

Madeline Johnson

SUMMER SAVORY

Herb of the Month of July for Herb Society of America

Summer Savory is a small and pungent herb, native to the Mediterranean. It is well known in the south of France, used freely in Europe and the Middle East, and is essential to the culinary tradition of Canada's Atlantic coast. But for many American gardeners and cooks, this easy-to-grow annual remains unknown or is confused with its perennial cousin Winter Savory.

Summer Savory's botanical name is *Satureja hortensis*, and it belongs to the Mint family (*Lamiaceae*). The pretty little plant has elongated leaves resembling a cross between the stubby foliage of thyme and needle-like rosemary. Crushing and sniffing a handful on a summer day is like inhaling a tonic.

Summer Savory has lilac tubular flowers which bloom in the northern hemisphere from July to September. It grows to around 1 to 2 feet in height and has very slender, bronze-green leaves. Summer Savory is raised from seed grown in a rich, light soil. The seeds are very slow to germinate.

The early spring seedlings are often topped for fresh use in June. When the plants are in flower, they may be pulled up and dried for winter use.

This versatile herb has a flavor similar to Thyme or Oregano; when cooked it adds an intense peppery hit to dishes. Long associated with bean dishes, Summer Savory contains the phenol carvacrol whose carminative properties may tame the gas that legumes can produce. But its uses throughout history go beyond the dinner table and up to the bedroom. Ancient Romans believed Summer Savory to be a natural aphrodisiac, and its lusty reputation even meant it was banned from being grown in the gardens of European monasteries.

In France, Summer Savory is called *Sarriette*, and it is an ingredient in the classic *Herbes de Provence* mixture. Hungarians like it (they call it *Borsikafű*). It's important in eastern Europe in general. Germans love Summer Savory with beans (they call it *Bohnenkraut* or bean herb). It is often the basis of regional Middle Eastern za'atar spice mixes. On Canada's east coast, Summer Savory is absolutely necessary for dishes such as *Fricot* (a stew made with potatoes and chicken, fish, or rabbit) and for poultry dressing, especially at Thanksgiving. Summer Savory is used in Romanian cuisine, especially in stuffed cabbage or grape leaf rolls and in grilled ground meat rolls.

Late June: The leaves and stems are fragile and soft and can be chopped up together. Dress some just-boiled, still-hot green beans with the savory and some good olive oil. Leaves and stems make a flavor-popping herb sauce for grilled mushrooms: Chop a cup of fresh savory leaves and tender stalks, add a cup of chopped parsley and a crushed clove of garlic, and cook both very gently in four tablespoons of butter. After five minutes, add a squeeze of lemon juice, cook another minute or so for the sauce to caramelize a little, and pour over grilled mushrooms just before eating.

You can also use Summer Savory as a flavor-packed stand-in for parsley in gremolata (Gremolata or gremolada is a green sauce made of chopped parsley, lemon zest, and garlic.)

July: Plants reach maturity. The midsummer leaves cooked gently in melted butter are a delicious topping for seven-minute eggs or pan-fried mushrooms. A generous handful warmed with olive oil and an anchovy or two and drizzled over a good steak, or across melted mozzarella on bruschetta, is memorably good. Or chop it up with lemon zest and garlic as a marinade for ribs or a whole, grilled fish.

How many of you are growing Summer Savory? Any delicious recipes to share? Send them to our Listserv.

Kathe Forrest



CULINARY GROUP



The July meeting of the Culinary Group will cover Chocolate from Bean to Bar and include taste testing eight (8!) dark chocolates sourced from different countries. Members are encouraged to bring their own chocolate concoctions along with recipes. (Pepto Bismol will be available.)

No meeting will be held in August.

Belinda Weatherly

FELT WORKSHOP

Recently a number of our members participated in a felt workshop. Cammie Beierle sent these photographs of this fun and educational event.



July 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HG = Horticulture Study Group			1	2	3
4	5	6	7 CG 10:00	8 Unit Meeting 9:30	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 HG 10:00-noon	23	24
25 Newsletter deadline Email to the editor lrowlett@gmail.com	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 No Unit Meeting	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 HG 10:00-noon	27	28
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Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.

Pioneer Paths is a publication of The Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$10.00 per year.

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

Chair—Kathe Forrest

Vice Chair Programs—Phoebe Lake
Secretary—Lori Yates

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers
Treasurer—Debi Thomas

THYME WELL SPENT SHOP

Ready for March 2022? While it may be eight months away, the planning has begun for a fabulous Thyme Well Spent Shop!

Start freezing that fruit for jams and jellies; if you need to find room in a freezer, call Cathy Nitsch at 979-421-9980. We intend to have a shop full of all your favorite spice blends, teas, vinegars, and the ever popular soaps and lotions. Additionally, look for some new items to be added to our inventory. And yes, all of the beautiful handmade goods will finally be available to buy.

It's exciting just to think about!

Cathy Nitsch
Thyme Well Spent Shop