

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

September 2021

Volume 29, Number 1

September 6
Labor Day

September 20
Harvest Full Moon

September 22
Autumnal Equinox



MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: September 9, 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: Improve Your Soil with the Magic of Worm Castings

Speaker: Gary Green
Magic Worm Ranch
Plantersville, Texas

Due to the ongoing and increasing pandemic, the majority of board members agreed that our buffet style lunch is not a good plan. I will make available boxed lunches for those who request them. I am attempting to arrange with another vendor to give us a change. The cost will be covered by each member and will be between \$10.00 and \$13.00. Members can purchase a boxed lunch and eat it at the meeting or take it home. Members may also bring their own lunches to eat with the group.

Please let me know if you wish to purchase a box lunch before September 6 at pattymills67@gmail.com. You may also call or text at 832-557-8189.

Patty Mills
Hospitality Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The ducks were just here. They are cute but do make a mess. I longed for Fall the other day when it was “coolish” in the morning. Of course, that feeling did not last long, and the heat came on with a sear! The ground is turning brown as this hurricane season has not given Texans much rain -- just more Covid.

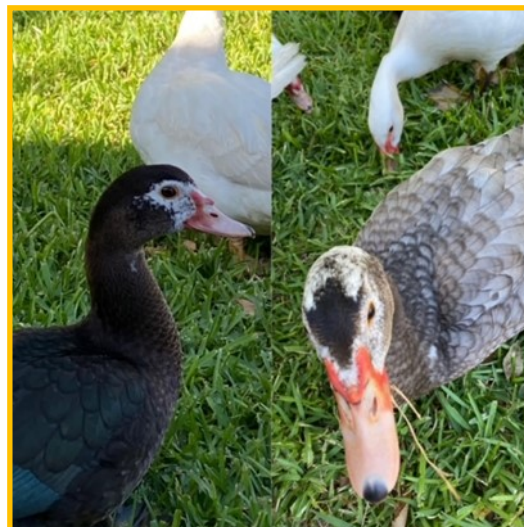
I hate to have to bring it up, but we are back to being very cautious at our meetings. Phoebe will fill you in on how we shall do this at the Brenham Presbyterian Church. There are options, however, one of which is Zoom. I will record the speaker and our meeting where you can participate and ask questions, etc. If you cannot watch live that day, then the link will be placed in an email. I would also like to remind those who have missed some meetings that I can always send you the link for a particular one.

At the September meeting we will be handing out the new membership cards. If you know that you will not be there, please email or call me and I will send it out to you or perhaps a friend is coming to the meeting and can drop it off.

The proposed agreement between Festival Hill and the Pioneer Unit has been sent to Lamar Lentz at Festival Hill for his approval. I should have his answer by the time the meeting rolls around. Festival Hill has been in discussions with someone about hiring and moving forward in taking care of the gardens...keep your fingers crossed!

At the September meeting we will also talk a bit about the March herb sale and possible Education Day.

Cheers,
Kathe Forrest
Unit Chair



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

We begin our new year of programs Thursday, September 9, at Brenham Presbyterian Church.

As usual, meet and greet will start at 9:30 and our presenter will begin at 10. Gary Green of Magic Worm Ranch in Plantersville will be our speaker. Magic Worm Ranch is a commercial producer of worm castings, and you'll see their brightly colored bags at many Texas nurseries.

From their website:

What are worm castings? Many are unfamiliar with the term. Castings are complete, organic soil enrichment that is produced naturally by earthworms.

Gary will also bring worm casting to sell!

After our presentation and business meeting, we will once again have boxed lunches. See elsewhere in this newsletter on how to order one from Patty Mills. You are of course, welcome to bring your own lunch or leave after the meeting. Our first concern is the safety of our members. To that end, we will have chairs spaced apart for social distancing and we are encouraging masks while inside. As usual Kathe will send out a zoom invite and also record our meeting for those more comfortable at home.

Looking forward to seeing everyone again. And speaking of looking, check out these photos of my Rudbeckia herbstonne. I think the seed heads are just as pretty as the flowers themselves!

Phoebe Lake
Programs Chair



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Happy September, Fellow Herbalists and Gardeners!

I hope everyone had a successful and abundant summer garden. As I write this article, August is just a few days from ending, heralding that fall is near (or at least nearer, Hurray!!). Time to plan the fall garden.

The end of the summer garden reminds me of the children's nursery rhyme:

Mary, Mary, quite contrary
How did your garden grow
Blue Bells and Cockle Shells
And Little Maids all in a row.

How did your summer garden grow? I encourage each of you to write an article (or two) over the next couple of months and submit it to the Pioneer Paths Newsletter. Tell us about your successes and failures. We can learn from both. Did you plant something new and exotic? Use a new soil mixture or different fertilizer? Did you try a new recipe using a plant you grew? Maybe a salad using edible flowers? Or.... maybe a new cocktail using a new herb? Did the unusual weather this summer affect your plants?

You can earn up to 4 volunteer hours for each article you write and submit to the newsletter. How easy can that be? Linda Rowlett is our newsletter editor. She starts compiling the newsletter at the end of each month so she can send it out at the beginning of the next month. Submit your article by the end of week 3 or the beginning of week 4. (Editor's Note: The deadline is always on the calendars in the newsletter.)

Speaking of volunteer hours: I am including the **Guidelines for Reporting Volunteer Hours** in this newsletter as a resource to remind you of what does and doesn't count towards volunteer hours. As I mentioned in the August newsletter, July 1st was the beginning of the Pioneer Unit's new Fiscal Year. Each active member is required to attend 3 meetings and earn 20 volunteer hours each Fiscal Year (July 1st through June 30th). NOTE: attending Unit meetings or Special Interest Group meetings does not count toward volunteer hours.

Also please continue documenting your hours in the Track It Forward app.

Herbally Yours,
Diana Sellers
Membership Chair



Guidelines for Reporting Volunteer Hours

Gardens:

Time spent watering, pulling weeds and other support of Festival Hill, Sensory Garden, or "other" gardens (those designated by Pioneer Unit Board).

Host Team Coordinator:

Coordinates host team to set up for Monthly Unit meetings. 5 hours

Hostess:

Supports Host Team at Monthly Unit meetings. 4 hours

Speaker Angel:

Supports Monthly Unit meeting speaker.

Educational:

Share With Community:

Sharing knowledge *outside* of the Pioneer Unit (Ex: a non-formal presentation at a booth or a fair or during an herb day or at the Bee Festival, at a school or other group not affiliated with HSA Pioneer Unit.)

Presentation:

Sharing knowledge *within* the Pioneer Unit or another HSA unit.

Articles for Unit Newsletter - up to 4 hours

Participating in Board approved activities – hours vary

Study or other Sub-Groups:

What counts toward hours:

Any activity that results in an article for the newsletter.

Any activity that involves a presentation to the Unit as a whole.

What does not count toward hours:

Attendance at group meetings or other group assignments, unless you are *Presenting or Sharing With Community* your personal results or knowledge.

Herbal FORUM (Round Top) Prep Activities:

Any activity preparing for FORUM during the year.

Herbal FORUM (Round Top) Activities:**Hospitality:**

Support Thyme Well Spent Shoppe, Guests and Presenters with refreshments during FORUM, possibly set-up and cleanup.

Registration:

Greet registered Guests at front door of auditorium, give out registration packets and badges, answer questions from all attenders. Hours per shift – 8+ possible

Plant Sale:

Caring for plants during Forum. Please ask Membership Committee if unsure.

Plant Sale Holding Area:

Watching over plants for Guests and Members before the plants are paid for. Up to 8 hours

Plant Sale Cashier:

Receive payments for plants. Hours per shift

Plant Sale Watering:

Watering plants pre/during Forum. 8+ hours possible

Gazebo:

Support sale of items made by Members. Hours per shift

Thyme Well Spent Shoppe:

Work inside at sale. Hours per shift

Setup/Break Down Team:

Support Setup Committee. Prepare for lunches at Menke House and various areas for Presenters during Forum.

Unit Admin:

Time spent administering duties as Chair of a Committee or Pioneer Unit Board of Directors Member. EX: editing yearbook, organizing special events or groups, sending cards.

Hours not applicable:

Travel time to/from any activity. Attending Monthly Unit meetings (Except March preparation for FORUM meeting). Preparing a dish for breakfast/lunch at Monthly Unit meeting.

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Basil has a checkered past in folklore. In Greek mythology, basil was a plant that belonged to the devil, but in Hindu traditions, it symbolized faithfulness and love. Mary Doebbeling, Linda Rowlett, and Susan Yancey provided the Horticulture Study Group with a fascinating and humorous summary of the folklore and history of basil at our August meeting. Here are a few tidbits from their presentation:

- Basil most probably originated in Asia and Africa.
- Alexander the Great brought basil to Greece.
- The use of basil in pesto began in Genoa.
- Carry a sprig of basil in your pocket to bring wealth, and place a pot near the door of your business to attract customers.
- In The Decameron, there is a story of Isabella and the Pot of Basil where Isabella dug up the murdered body of her lover and planted his head in a pot of basil which she watered with her tears.
- The mortal Tulasi was tricked into betraying her husband by the god Vishnu. In her grief, Tulasi killed herself and basil grew from her ashes.



Back in Texas, we are growing two varieties of Tulsi basil, Vana and Kapoor. Both are doing well in our gardens with rapid growth through the summer months. Vana is referred to as a "tree basil" and considered a sacred species of holy basil in India. Kapoor was introduced in the U.S. as "Holy Basil" and is the most common of the Tulsi basil in cultivation in the U.S. If you are growing it, give it a taste – some think that it tastes like bubblegum.

Up next for the Horticulture Study Group is a presentation on non-culinary and non-medicinal uses of basil at its September meeting. We will also experiment with ways to taste test the different culinary basil in our study in preparation for our January presentation to the Unit.

Madeline Johnson

CULINARY GROUP



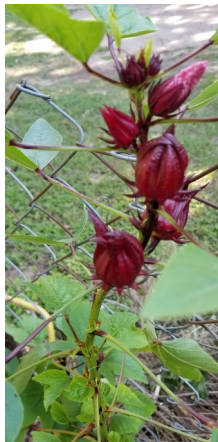
The Culinary Group meeting on September 1 will include a demonstration from Sara Holland on herbal infusions and how to save your herbs. We will eat Mediterranean food, including an orange fennel salad, and identify the Mediterranean countries we will explore culinarily this year. Our next meeting is October 6 at 10:00 in Menke House at Festival Hill. All are welcome. There's always something to eat!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- September 2 — Kay Scanapico
September 12 — Debi Thomas
September 13 — Janie Plummer
September 14 — Joanna Hagler
September 15 — Pat Cox and Sue Edmundson
September 22 — Linda Hartson
September 26 — Sherrie Tolbert
September 27 — Connie Gwyn and Jane Press
September 30 — Georgetta Welch



Kay Scanapico (September 2) wrote: "In the Scanapico garden I enjoy seeing things growing from seeds that were left from previous years and just seeing what comes up from season to season. Spring usually begins with larkspur, poppies, and dill. A little later the rudbeckia try to take over. We have had a few little mullein plants come up from time to time, but this spring, this one had a bit of a growth spurt. It produced lots of seed—so next year I may be busy weeding this medicinal plant before it takes over home and garden."



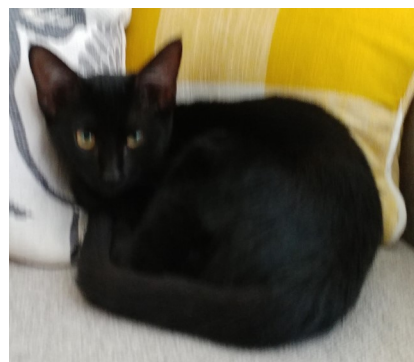
Janie Plummer (September 13) wrote the following:

"I am forwarding a photo of a Roselle Hibiscus that was given to me last summer. I planted the seeds from that plant, and this summer I gave plants to family and neighbors. It is such an interesting plant that I have enjoyed growing.

"I joined Pioneer Unit in 2007, and I feel blessed to be a part of such a wonderful group."

Sherrie Tolbert (September 26) sent pictures of her four cats and wrote: "The big 7-0 this year and am officially not so young but totally blessed with a good life and feline family."

Sherrie identified Sophie, 13, a fat calico; Sissy, 1, a fluffy calico; Stanley, 1, a grey tabby; and baby Sammie, 2 months old, solid black. She added that the June monsoons floated Sammie under her porch.



Jane Press (September 27) mentioned that she has not received email for some time, so you might want to catch up with her at jane@pecangroveinn.com.

She reported the following: "My husband, James, and I love to visit with family, especially our newest member -- our first great grandchild, Blair. We love to travel.

"We spend several weeks in Colorado. Also, we enjoy traveling internationally. In 2022 we plan a trip to Germany, Austria, and Switzerland."

HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA

The HSA Herb of the month for August was Cayenne Pepper. Peppers are some of the only things growing well in our southern vegetable gardens at this time, so in case you did not make it to the herbsociety.org website, here are a few of the tips and recipes posted there for August. (Note: You can check in monthly for recipes and tips!)

Tips

- Add ground or powdered cayenne to seasoning blends, rubs and marinades for a pungent flavor and spicy heat.
- Sprinkle powdered cayenne sparingly over foods and into soups, stews, and sauces as well as egg dishes.
- Mix chopped fresh cayenne into sautéed vegetables.
- Add a pinch of cayenne to hot chocolate for a spicy version of the drink.
- Sprinkle on watermelon for a sweet heat treat.
- Add to hummus, guacamole and other dips.
- Toss popped popcorn with parmesan cheese and cayenne to taste.
- The capsaicin is in the membrane surrounding the seeds. Remove this to control the level of heat added to dishes or to use the rest of the pod.

Spicy Herb Roasted Nuts

1 ½ cups almonds
1 ½ cups walnut halves
1 cup hazelnuts
1 cup pecan halves
½ cup maple syrup
¼ teaspoon cayenne
1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh oregano leaves
1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves
1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary leaves
1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh savory leaves
1 ½ teaspoons chopped fresh marjoram leaves
3 tablespoons olive oil
About 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Mix almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, pecans, maple syrup, cayenne, oregano, sage, thyme, rosemary, savory, marjoram, and oil in a 10- by 15-inch rimmed pan. Sprinkle nuts with 1 teaspoon salt. Bake in a 300° oven, stirring occasionally, until all liquid evaporates and nuts are golden under the skin (break open to test), about 45 minutes. Let cool. Taste and add more salt if desired. (Sunset.com)

Rosemary Cheddar Bite-Sized Bars

4 tablespoons butter
2 cups rolled oats
1 ½ cups cheddar cheese, grated
1 egg beaten
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary
Pinch cayenne pepper

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease bottom of an 8-inch square pan. Melt butter in a saucepan. Mix the remaining ingredients in a bowl, then blend in the melted butter. Press mixture into prepared pan. Bake for 35 minutes. To serve, cut into bite-sized bars.


(Becky Cortino, HSA Member at Large, Mid-Atlantic District
Essential Guide to Growing and Cooking with Herbs, 2007)

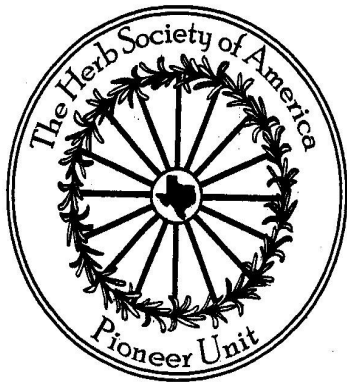
September 2021

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

October 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory	HG = Horticulture Study Group				1	2
3	4	5	6 CG 10:00 Menke House	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting	15	16
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31						



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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."

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Secretary—Lori Yeats

Vice Chair Programs—Phoebe Lake

Treasurer—Debi Thomas

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers

