

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

October 6
Board Meeting

October 20
Hunters Full Moon



October 2021

Volume 29, Number 2

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: October 14, 2021

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

Location: St. John's United Church of Christ
Burton, Texas

Directions: [from the east] Exit Highway 290 onto Texas Spur 125 north into Burton. At North Brazos Street, turn right and continue to East Texas Street. Turn right and go one block to North Colorado Street. The church will be on your left.

[from the west] Exit Highway 290 onto Texas 390 going northeast into Burton. At the intersection of 390 (Washington Street) and Main Street, continue straight into Burton on East Washington Street. At North Colorado Street, the church will be on your right.

Program: Stop Composting and Start Eating: Your Edible Weeds

Speaker: Mark Vorderbruggen

Hosts: Mary Doebbeling, Esther Hartman, Becky Nichols, and Belinda Weatherly

Lunch: Bring your own lunch to eat with the group



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Gazing into my yard, I see the last of the zinnias growing, butterflies darting here and there, and the two hummingbirds that fight over my 3 feeders. Ruby-throated and black-chinned are the predominant ones for this area. My peppers are still popping – Shishito and Banana. How does your garden look?

Meeting details are up in the air as I write this. I know we are all very, very tired of having Covid dictate how we handle our meetings, but that is the way of the world in this moment. I am hoping to include in this newsletter the agreement with Festival Hill so that we can vote on it at the meeting.

Other news at Festival Hill: a huge wedding took place this past weekend, and there were many new plants put in around the Festival Hall and things spruced up quite a bit. The Pharmacy Garden is looking amazing, but the Mary/Cloister Garden could use help.

We do have volunteers coming from the Round Top/Carmine High School later in October. I will be asking for volunteers to lead those juniors and seniors as to what to do. Anyway, it is exciting to have help from another generation!

Hypertufa news!! Henry will lead us in a workshop on November 6th -- see information about that separately in this newsletter.

Hope that's it.

Best,
Kathe Forrest
Unit Chair



This is a lynx spider — genus *Peucetia* — on my zinnias.

FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

And now for something completely different!

Our speaker for October is Dr. Mark "Merriwether" Vorderbruggen. He is well known as a plant forager and educator. His presentation title is "Stop composting and start eating: your edible weeds."

From medicinemanplantco.com:

"Mark grew up in the wilds of Minnesota where his parents and grandparent utilized the amazing wild foods and medicinal plants found in local woods, fields and lakes. The healing connection with nature that Dr Vorderbruggen has known since childhood is foundation to who he is today. His love of nature drove him to teach people about the miraculous plants nature has to offer."

His passion today is educating people about which plants are edible and/or medicinal and offering guided walks on foraging. We are fortunate to have him speak to our Unit.

His book [The Idiots Guide to Foraging](#) is a bestseller, and his website foragingtexas.com is popular with beginning and advanced foragers.

As I said, something completely different!

See you on Thursday, October 14, at St John's Church of Christ, Burton. Meet and greet from 9:30-10:00 a.m., with speaker beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Phoebe Lake
Programs Chair



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Happy Goblin Season!!

I wasn't able to attend our September Unit meeting because I was vacationing. I understand, though, it was quite the exciting, wormy event. It's amazing how beneficial a bunch of worm poo can be for our gardens. There was a good turn-out with 36 members and three visitors attending. We also had one new member joining. Thanks so much to Cammie Beierle and Joanna Hagler for manning the Sign-In Table for me.

The visitors included Hildegard Knoop, sponsored by Cammie Beierle; Cindy McAllister, sponsored by Belinda Weatherly; and Jan Hughes, sponsored by Connie Gwyn. Welcome to all the visitors, and we look forward to you coming back. Jan Hughes has indicated that she is interested in becoming a member. A huge thank you to members who bring visitors!!

In addition to our visitors, Noreen Barker submitted her application for membership. Noreen is a friend of Pat Cox. Pat has brought Noreen to several meetings over the past year and has been actively working with Pat in the gardens. Noreen recently moved to Round Top. She lives at 6009 Andreas Road, Round Top, Texas 78954; her cell number is 281-389-5017; and her email address is noreenjbarker@gmail.com. Noreen likes to garden but hasn't studied herbs. She is very interested in learning about them. Welcome to the Pioneer Unit, Noreen. There are so many very knowledgeable herbalists in the Unit, so I feel certain you will learn lots and lots in no time.

The Herb Society of America asked us to distribute Membership Cards for them this year. Many of you picked up your cards during the September meeting. We will continue to distribute more during the October meeting. Any cards that aren't picked up in October will be mailed to members.

Herbally Yours,
Diana Sellers
Membership Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
September 9, 2021

Kathe Forrest, Chair, welcomed members to the September meeting and thanked them for observing Covid precautions. She asked for a minute of silence to remember Lynn Ehler, a thirty-year member of the Pioneer Unit who recently passed away.

Because Programs Chair Phoebe Lake was absent, Kathe introduced speaker Gary Green of the Magic Worm Ranch who told us how worm castings are produced and how good they are for soil. After the presentation, members had an opportunity to purchase bags of worm castings.

A list of the coming year's programs was available to members, but there is the possibility of changes depending on the Covid situation.

The Pioneer Unit and Festival Hill are close to completing an agreement, to be verified in October. Unit members will take care of the Pharmacy Garden, and in return a plaque will be installed with the names of the Unit, Henry Flowers, and Madalene Hill. In addition, Festival Hill will host the Unit's 2022 Herb Sale on March 18 and 19 but will not receive any money from the event. The Mary Garden is not included in this agreement, but members can work there and elsewhere in the gardens.

The 2022 Herb Sale will not be part of a full Forum, but there will be an "education day" on the Saturday of the event. Speakers will include Henry Flowers, Bee Holleran, and Billi Parus. Herb of the Year 2022 is Viola, and Henry will give a talk on this herb at our December meeting. The Unit is seeking an alternate name for "Herb Education Day," and the person to come up with the winning suggestion will receive a free tee shirt.

Thyme Well Spent Shop will return next year with lots of old favorites and some new ones including candles and lavender honey. Members are encouraged to make products for the shop. The Gazebo will also return next year, and Kathe is seeking someone to run a hypertufa workshop. Other garden-related items are welcomed.

There were four guests at the meeting. Several members had earned five-year pins. Kathe recognized members with September birthdays. Patty Mills thanked the meeting hostesses.

Door prizes were won by Beverly Green, Joanne Reichle, Mary Doebbeling, and Cathy Nitsch.

Cammie Beierle is willing to hold crafting workshops for interested members.

Mary Doebbeling reminded those interested in the District Gathering in San Antonio on September 24 and 25 that they can sign up online.

Kay Scanapico asked anyone interested in joining her herb-stripping group to let her know, and she will add them to her group email. The group normally meets on the Thursday after the Unit meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Pat Cox for Lori Yeats, Secretary

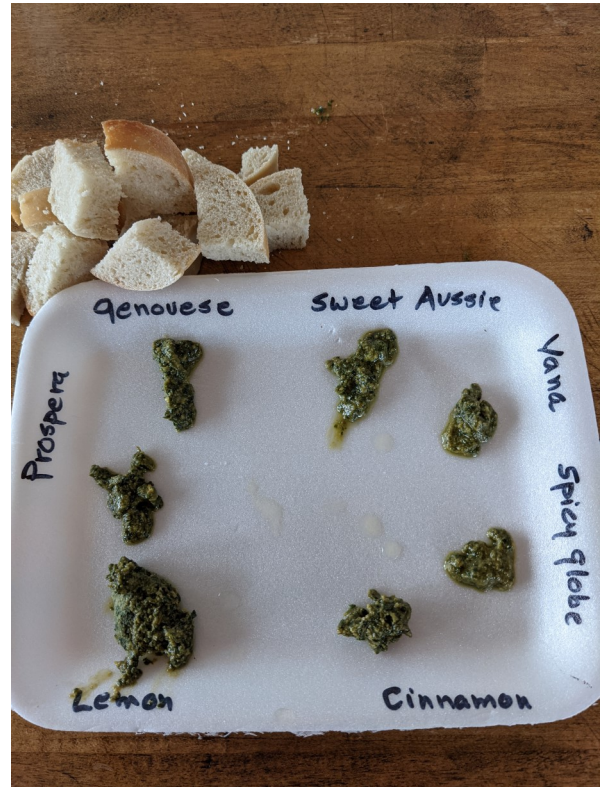
HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Once again we had a great meeting of the Horticulture Study Group. Joanna Hagler and Patty Mills gave a wonderful presentation on crafts and other uses for basil. Best part? We all got free samples! Everything from basil scrubs, to basil soap, to basil vodka perfume (yes, you read that right).

Next, we had our pesto and vinegar tastings, using cubes of bread. We sampled seven different pestos! Many of us were surprised at how different the flavors were. Everyone agreed we should use pesto and not vinegar for tasting at our presentation to the unit in January. The vinegars were, well, just too vinegary.

We then chatted about how our basil plants are doing. Comments were wide ranging, from "It's taking over!" to "It's dead!" Summer certainly takes a toll on even heat loving plants.

Phoebe Lake



CULINARY GROUP



October Culinary Group continues its year-long exploration of Mediterranean cuisine with Spain. Lovely paella and almond cake along with other contributions from members. The November meeting will be the cuisine of Morocco and Algeria. Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at Menke House at Festival Hill. All are welcome. Contact Belinda Weatherly at 979-357-4599 for further information.

Belinda Weatherly

AGREEMENT WITH FESTIVAL HILL

For discussion at the Unit meeting, here are the tenets of the proposed agreement between the Unit and Festival Hill:

1. The Pioneer Unit will be responsible for the Pharmacy Garden.
2. The Unit may conduct meetings at Festival Hill at no cost, including meetings to be held outside or inside at the Edythe Bates Chapel or Menke House, or the schoolrooms, subject to availability, and following Covid restrictions, if any.
3. Festival Hill would receive no money or percentage from the Plant Sale for March 2022, after which we will renegotiate.
4. A poster/plaque or some signage would be erected near the Pharmacy Garden that states this garden is maintained by the Pioneer Herb Society and possibly includes a short history of these gardens to include Madeline Hill's and Henry Flowers' contributions. The Unit would pay for this sign.
5. This is a limited agreement for a year and then subject to an annual review. We will be committed to this garden and show up to do the work. The Pioneer Unit will pay for new plants to be added as well as new sprinklers.
6. The Herb Forum or Education Day (name to be decided) to be held at Festival Hill in March 2022 will be subject to a new Memorandum of Understanding drawn up between HSA Pioneer Unit and Festival Hill.



THYME WELL SPENT SHOP

Thyme Well Spent Shop is looking forward to a return to our retail store in 2022. We will have our tried and true products that always sell out (lemon curd, marmalade, spice blends, dill mustard, lotions, tea) and will be adding a few new items also. Our hand goods shop will once again be selling all the beautiful items made by our members. Please contact Kathy Kietlinski, our jams and jellies chairperson, if you have an interest in making any of our delicious condiments. We provide the jars; all you have to do is lend your talents in the kitchen! Finally, save your herbal and general cookbooks and magazines that you might be thinking of giving away to donate, as we will again have the book sale benefitting the Scholarship program at HSA Headquarters. Only six months to go before all the fun begins!!!

Cathy Nitsch and Belinda Weatherly
Time Well Spent Shop

HYPERTUFA WORKSHOP

Calling all creative and not so creative (you may think) artists!

Henry Flowers has agreed to lead a workshop on making Hypertufas.

Hypertufa is a lightweight, porous material used in craft projects. It is made from a mixture of peat moss, Portland cement, and either sand, vermiculite, or perlite. After the ingredients are mixed together, they are molded into shape and allowed to dry.

We need to have you sign up by emailing me, or you can come to the next meeting and sign up there. That way, we can see how many sessions we might need.

"Are what the attendees making going to be sold at the Herbal Forum or is it intended that they will take them home and produce more?" This is a question from Henry.

I am hoping that perhaps if you make 2 items you might contribute one or both to the Pioneer Unit Sale. As I explained at the last meeting, we are initiating the Gazebo once more and will be selling our creations of hypertufas, possibly filled with succulents, or as bird baths, etc. One year someone brought ostrich eggs to sell, recalled Betty Pior. The Gazebo was a wonderful focal point of the sale, and many of the items sold quickly.

When and where: Saturday, November 6th near the Pharmacy Garden.
Morning time — 10:00 till noon or so.

This will depend on numbers of attendees. Let's have some fun!

Kathe Forrest
kforrest58@gmail.com



Some Garden Tasks for the Month of October

October, with cooler (let's hope!) temperatures and an increased chance of rain, is a great time to be getting a few tasks done in the garden. I've compiled a list of some suggestions. It is not exhaustive, but I hope you'll find something on the list that will be appropriate to your garden.

-Seeds – now is the time to sow many types of seeds in the garden. Here is a list of some suggestions:

-ornamentals: poppies (all sorts), larkspur, bluebonnets (get scarified seed if possible), cornflowers, Mexican hat, Indian blanket, baby blue eyes, coreopsis – basically about any of the wildflowers you see in our area that bloom in the spring. A few others are calendulas, borage, Johnny jump ups, stock, and nasturtiums (like cool, but not freezing temps).

-herbs: cool season annuals such as parsley, fennel, dill, chervil, and cilantro (coriander). These are all relatively easy to start from seed but can also be purchased as small starter plants. Garlic and onion chives are also easy to start now from seed.

-Color Plants – you can start to plant cool season color plants found at local nurseries now and into November and early December. Here are a few suggestions: snapdragons (come in a variety of sizes and colors), dianthus (bedding types and Sweet William types with taller, clustered flowers – all in a range of colors from white to pink, purple and red), petunias (in a wide range of colors, but beware that they may freeze in extreme cold conditions – two favorites of mine are 'Purple Wave' and 'Laura Bush' which both get big), sweet alyssum (I love the white ones best as they show up well – can freeze in heavy cold spells – if you encounter a variety called 'Snow Princess,' give it a try – it acts more like a perennial and can get big and blooms almost year-round), and of course violas and pansies (these come in a vast array of colors and are very cold hardy, but perhaps should not be planted until daytime temperatures are staying relatively cool – warm temperatures may make them stretch or "melt"). I will be doing a program on the genus Viola in December and hope to bring a few violas/pansies to sell as it will still be a good time to plant them then.

-Veggies – I'll admit that veggies aren't my forte, but some good ones to plant now are kale, Swiss chard, mustard, collards, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, lettuce, snow peas, and sugar snap peas. Plus, don't forget root vegetables such as radishes, turnips, and beets. It is a bit late to be planting fall crop vegetables such as tomatoes, cucumbers and eggplants. If you still have peppers in your garden, you will likely see them starting to set more fruit with cooler temperatures and more rain. Now is also a great time to plant garlic cloves, or sow onions and leeks by seed for harvesting late next spring (plant onion sets (small plants) in the spring). Our cool season is really the best time of the year for vegetable production in general.

-Hardy Herbs – fall is also a great time to plant hardy herbs such as oregano, rosemary (usually winter hardy, but not last year!), Mexican mint marigold, mints, – just about any herb except for the scented geraniums (unless in a pot you can protect from harsh cold), tropicals such as lemongrass and Vietnamese coriander, and, of course, the tender basil.

-Pruning and fertilizing – be careful about doing either right now as you don't want to stimulate growth on many plants going into the winter. Generally, at this time of year, if I feel the need to

fertilize a plant, I'll use a slow-release organic fertilizer such as Medina's Growin' Green, which slowly breaks down and feeds over a prolonged period. Do fertilize cool season herbs, veggies, and color plants when you sow or plant them. For winter color plants I love to use Nelson's Color Star fertilizer which was originally formulated for pansies. It works great and keeps plants blooming and works wonderfully well for potted color plants. For veggies I like to use the organic fertilizer mentioned above. If you have a favorite and it works, by all means keep using it. I tend to kill plants with Miracle Gro, but others swear by it. Good advice: don't change tactics unless what you are doing isn't working (aka "don't mess with it if it isn't broken").

-Soil amending – When planting any new plants that like a rich soil, it is always a good idea to amend the soil with compost. As it breaks down it will provide good nutrition to the plants (it also does a lot more, but this is the main gist). If you have a plant which is stressed after the heat of summer and needs to be perked up, consider a light top-dressing of compost over its root system and then a layer of mulch. We often think of mulching in spring, but it is a good task in the fall as well – helping to keep down winter weeds, hold in moisture, and generally make plantings look tidier.

-Weeds – be on the lookout for winter weeds that will start to come up – chickweed, henbit, cleavers, sow thistles, and more. Diligently ridding them from the garden will keep them from setting seed and therefore from becoming a bigger nuisance. Dandelions are also a weed common in the winter and are easy to control if you keep an eye on them but do remember that they (and some others such as chickweed) can be good additives to the winter salad bowl. Young dandelion leaves can be eaten fresh or cooked and are good for the digestion.

-Outdoor Potted Plants – If you have potted plants outdoors that you will be bringing into the house or some other protected spot over the winter, start checking them now for insect issues. It is best to control such things now while it is relatively easy to do so. With many of my potted plants that tend to be prone to having such issues, I like to spray them once or twice before moving them with insecticidal soap or neem oil. It may be tempting to try to overwinter plants such as wax leaf begonias, impatiens and such, but I recommend letting those plants go and starting over next year as they are generally not worth the effort. Instead, plant those pots with some dianthus or violas and enjoy them.

-Plant – fall is a superb time of year to plant hardy ornamental trees, fruit trees, shrubs, perennials and more. Over winter the roots keep growing (even if the top of the plant is dormant) and provide a more stable support for the tree before the next summer's heat. Avoid planting any plant that you know is either tender or considered marginal. You may find citrus plants available this time of year, and it is tempting to buy one and plant it while available. If you can protect it, I'd buy it now, but not plant it until after the danger of frost has passed in the spring.

If unsure about hardiness and whether to plant now, ask your local nursery professional or, if you can't find one of those, send me a query via email. If you have any questions about any of this, please don't hesitate to ask.

Have a splendid autumn!
Henry Flowers

October Birthdays

- October 5 — Ginger Heath
- October 13 — Carla Lessard
- October 14 — Mary Ann Hillegeist
- October 16 — Ann Lugg
- October 17 — Pat Garrett
- October 18 — Lynda Perryman
- October 21 — Janice Stuff
- October 27 — Betty Pior
- October 28 — Joyce Caddell
- October 31 — Patty Royal





Ginger Heath (October 5) wrote: "Like many, Bob and I were Houstonians before buying land in Fayette County in 1995. Upon completion of our home in 2002, we celebrated our first Christmas here. I joined the Pioneer Unit in 2004; my sponsor was Kay Scanapico. Here's a memory of earlier years: a predecessor of our Herbal Forum plant sale was held in Round Top on the tiny grounds outside of what is now Prost wine shop. How far and famous we have become since then!"

Ann Lugg (October 16) sent this lovely butterfly photo and wrote the following: "I don't know if I love the fall season because the weather is just about perfect or because I have an October birthday. I grew up in a large family, and birthdays were one day of the year when it was all about you. By the time "my day" rolls around, I usually have the summer garden cleared and have planted a few seeds for the cooler months. And it's almost time to start cleaning up the leaves that have fallen from the 30-odd pecan trees in our yard. Next is harvesting the nuts. The cycle is intense but so satisfying!"




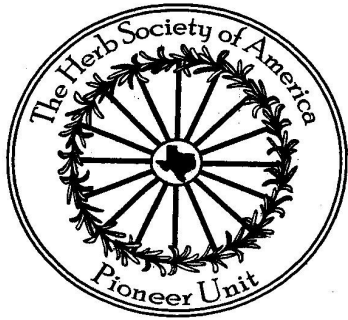
October 2021



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

November 2021

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



PIONEER PATHS

Volume 29

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

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers

Secretary—Lori Yeats

Treasurer—Debi Thomas

The morns are meeker than they were —
The nuts are getting brown —
The berry's cheek is plumper —
The rose is out of town.

The maple wears a gayer scarf —
The field a scarlet gown —
Lest I should be old-fashioned
I'll put a trinket on.

Emily Dickinson

