



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

February 2023

Volume 30, Number 6

February 2
Ground Hog Day

February 5
Snow Full Moon



February 14
Valentine's Day



February 20
Presidents' Day

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: February 9, 2023

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

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: Herbs Behind Bars

Speaker: James T. Langley, Jr.
Horticulture Instructor Lee College
Huntsville Center's program on the O. B. Ellis Unit

Angel: Kathe Forrest

Host Team: Cindy Nash, Susan Bame, Noreen Barker, Pat Cox,
Carroll Edwards, and Diana Reed



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello members,

February, the month before the herb and plant sale, and we are rushing around like busy bees.

Festival Hill has started the registration process for the Herbal Forum. Information is provided below. Please let your friends know about the Forum. It should be a very interesting one. Ann Lugg has been working on the Pioneer Unit website, and there is a page just for this event with the Forum itinerary and information on the people presenting.

One of the speakers for "Wild about Parsley" will be talking to us this month at our meeting - Scooter Langley.

At the January Unit meeting, there were some concerns brought up regarding working at the Forum. I will let Diana Sellers elaborate more, but I will be answering questions at the February meeting concerning the Board decisions. These will be further taken up at the April Board meeting.

In national news, HSA has a membership committee established which Diana and I have joined to raise money for the organization. It looks like national dues may be going up.

See you all soon. Here is the link to the Festival Hill page where people can register for the March Forum:

<https://festivalhill.org/calendar/details.php?id=4106>

Best,

Kathe Forrest
Pioneer Unit Chair

The Pioneer Unit is up and running on Instagram under the name PioneerUnit.

<https://www.instagram.com/pioneerunit/?next=%2F>

If you have an account, please check out the pictures and like the page and share if you can. Tori Farley has graciously agreed to post and be the leader/facilitator of that area of our face to the world.

While there, you might look at the Herb Society of America's posts and the Herb Society UK - all with interesting and educational info.

Kathe

FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

Is it spring yet? Sadly not yet, but the promise of warmer weather has arrived in my flowerbeds. My favorite bulb is Snowbells, and mine are just started to bloom. I know warmer weather is just around the corner! Resist the impulse to prune and trim: remember the dead leaves and branches offer great protection from a potential freeze.

This month's presenter is James (Scooter) Langley. Mr. Langley will discuss how offenders in correctional institutes are taught valuable skills in garden design, production and maintenance which leads to herb gardens sprouting up on TDCJ (Texas Department of Criminal Justice) units around the state. He will also discuss the benefits of horticulture therapy and bring with him a former student who has been through the program and now owns a successful business. I'm attaching a link from [Greenhouse Magazine](https://www.greenhousemag.com/article/community-involvement-second-chance/) that discusses his success in working with the Criminal Justice Ellis Unit in Huntsville. We will all be inspired by his work! Looking forward to seeing everybody on February 9th.

<https://www.greenhousemag.com/article/community-involvement-second-chance/>

Tess Hartman
Programs Chair

[Editor's Note: If the link does not work for you, copy it and paste it in your browser.]



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

January Meeting: Right on Thyme, the Horticulture Study Group presented a fantastic program all about - you guessed it – Thyme. It was very informative. The Horticulture Study members had a good thyme sharing what they learned over the past year. We especially enjoyed figuring out ways to include the word thyme in everything we said. The word thyme provides fantastic entertainment. I found myself laughing all year. We all truly had "The Thyme of our Life." Thanks so much to Madeline Johnson and Phoebe Lake for coming up with this wonderful idea of a Horticulture Study Group and for all their leadership (and for putting up with us – we can be rather boisterous at times).

January Meeting Attendance: Thirty-six members attended the January meeting, along with four guests: Jill Wilson, Benee Curtis (Joan Jordan), Martha Neva (Debi Thomas), and Debbie Pruitt. Martha and Debbie are very close to completing the Pioneer Unit joining requirements. In addition to Martha and Debbie, Courtney Kieke is a prospective member working actively to complete her joining requirements. I look forward to announcing their membership in the near future.

Recognition of Member's Anniversary Dates: During the January meeting, Ann Allen and Carla Lessard were recognized for their membership tenure. Ann has been a member of the Pioneer Unit since January 1998 (25 years), and Carla has been a member since January 2003 (20 years). Congratulations!

March Forum, Plant Sale, and Thyme Well Spent Shoppe: March will be here before you know it, and there is much to be done to prepare. Please keep bringing me your seeds. Also, continue bringing any books and magazines that you would like to donate to the sale. We would like any books and/or magazines having to do with herbs, plants, gardening in general, and cooking. FYI - the books that shoppers particularly seemed to want at the last sale were small books that could be given to friends and family as thank-you gifts. Shoppers were also interested in fiction books that had something to do with herbs. Also needed are jams, lotions, dried herb packets, and handmade items. You earn volunteer hours while preparing any of these items. You need 20 hours of volunteer time to maintain your active membership status, and this is a **perfect** way to obtain those hours. Contact Cathy Nitsch for more information.

Volunteering at the Plant Sale, Thyme Well Spent Shoppe, and Forum: Each year the question pops up: "Who can volunteer at our March event if they are not members of the Pioneer Unit?" The Pioneer Unit Board recently discussed this question. The following statement was approved to be able to have a consistent approach and answer to this question and ensure that all non-member volunteers have the knowledge they need to work during this event:

If a prospective member signs up to volunteer for the plant sale or TWSS, they contact the membership chair to see where they are in the process of completing the joining requirements. A prospective member must have attended at least 3 meetings or attended 2 meetings and completed some of the gardening requirements. If the prospective member meets one of those requirements, then they will be assigned to work with a member during the plant sale/TWSS/Forum. They will not be counted as a full volunteer for any of these areas. They will not be allowed to volunteer for Forum activities such as speaker Angel or the Sign-in Table. They can assist with Forum set-up and tear-down.

Herbally yours,
Diana Sellers
Membership



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT

January 12, 2023

Tess Hartman, Programs Chair, welcomed members in lieu of Kathe Forrest, Chair, at 10:02.

Tess introduced Madeline Johnson, who, with Julie Johnson, Phoebe Lake, Diana Sellers, Betty Pior, and Linda Rowlett, presented results of the 2022 Horticulture Study Group investigation: Thyme: A Study of 8 varieties in a hot, dry summer. It was a fun, often humorous, and informative presentation of the nine-month learning experience about thyme.

Tess opened the business meeting 11:10.

Tess reminded us to make items for the Thyme Well Spent Shoppe and listed the speakers on the agenda for the Herbal Forum. She pointed out the sign-up sheets for Forum and asked that those volunteers working Friday register for a catered box lunch, if they wished, with a charge of about \$10. She added that those working on Saturday should register for the garden lunch that would be provided by Festival Hill.

Debi Meschwitz announced that the Bluebonnet Club annual flower show, Waltz Across Texas, would be held March 29-30, 2023.

Belinda Weatherly reported that there were 97 jars of mustards made for the TWSS at the Mustard Workshop in January. She offered hand-stitch kits to members who might complete them for TWSS.

Diana Sellers, Membership Chair, reported that we had 36 members present and introduced the guests: Jill Wilson, Benee Curtis, Martha Neva, and Debbie Pruitt. She congratulated Ann Allen who would receive her 25-year pin and Carla Lessard who would receive her 20-year pin. She also urged members to continue to bring seeds for sale at the TWSS.

Tess and Patty Mills, Hospitality Chair, drew tickets for door prizes. Jana Rinehart, Julie Johnson, Mary Reeves, and Becky Nichols were the recipients of the prizes.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24.

Respectfully submitted,

Cammie Beierle
Secretary





February Birthdays

February 3 — Tony Scanapico

February 17 — Barbara Solis

February 20 — Bonnie Lout

February 21 — Janie Cornelius

February 22 — Sara Holland

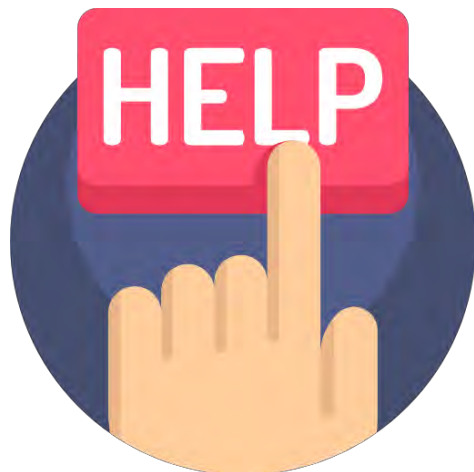
Barbara Solis (February 17) wrote: "My birthday is February 17. Like everyone who has a notable date for a birthday, mine was pegged with a special cake (heart shaped with pink icing), even though my mother knew I didn't like cake or the color pink, and every restaurant had a special meal the closest weekend to Valentine's Day. My oldest daughter Christina figured out the plus of my birthday. Every unsold plant or bouquet of flowers was discounted to the point she could bring me armfuls of roses, orchids and daffodils at the normal cost of a simple bouquet. The Fannin Street flower shops to the rescue."

Editor's Note: Barbara's post above got me to thinking about what other celebration days might occur during February. I found that one can apparently celebrate something every day — which is not a bad idea when you think about it!

Here are just a few of February's celebration days:

- February 1 - National Dark Chocolate Day
National Texas Day
- February 2 - National Tater Tot Day
- February 3 - National Carrot Cake Day
- February 4 - National Homemade Soup Day
- February 5 - World Nutella Day
- February 6 - National Frozen Yoghurt Day
- February 7 - National Fettuccine Alfredo Day
- February 8 - National Kite Flying Day
- February 9 - National Pizza Day

That gets you through our meeting date. There are multiple choices for every day, so let's celebrate!



VACANCY ON THE PIONEER UNIT BOARD

Cammie Beierle has notified the Pioneer Unit Board that she is unable to complete her term of office as Secretary. She is stepping down immediately. We need someone to step up to fill this position immediately. The term of office is through June 2024. Yes, it seems like a long time, but you know the time will fly by.

The duties of the Secretary are listed on the Pioneer Unit website under "Job Descriptions" which are under the "Member" tab on the banner title for the website. In addition to attendance at meetings, here are some of the key duties of the Secretary:

- Compile minutes from each quarterly meeting of the Board.
- Draft meeting minutes as soon as possible following meetings, and forward to the Members of the Board for review.
- Edit Board minutes as necessary. A second review of meeting attendees is useful before the final draft is ready for approval at the following quarterly Board meeting.
- Prepare a summarized version of the Board meeting for inclusion in the next appropriate Pioneer Paths.
- Send, or have sent, a copy of the final version of Board minutes a week prior to the next scheduled Board meeting to all Board Members.
- Attend all monthly meetings of the Pioneer Unit as possible and if not, appoint someone to take notes at the meeting.
- Prepare the monthly meeting minutes and submit to the editor of the Pioneer Paths.
- Preserve copies of all minutes, handouts, and newsletters (color copy) from quarterly Board and monthly Pioneer Unit meetings.
- Assemble a file of all documents for the year (meeting minutes, copies of Pioneer Paths, copies of meeting handouts, and relevant correspondence). Deliver the yearly compilation of meeting files to the Archives Chair (or in smaller periods of time if that is more amenable to both parties).

If this is something that you can devote some time to, in service to the Pioneer Unit, please contact me as soon as possible at 281-757-1988. The Pioneer Unit needs your assistance!

Linda L. Rowlett
Nominations Chair

General Information for Plant Sale (PS) Volunteers

The Plant Sale runs Friday, March 17th, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Saturday, March 18th, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. **The busiest time will be Friday morning.**

We want all volunteers to be able to help according to their abilities, preference, and schedule.

Setup is Monday-Thursday. We do not sell to the public before opening times. We will be roping off wagons until 8 a.m. Friday when the sale is ready for business, to discourage early shoppers.

Plant Sale Volunteers generally wear a green apron or vest. Red vests are our plant experts. Aprons/vests are located in the break area.

All purchases for PS supplies should be recorded on a reimbursement form, accompanied by the receipt, and turned over to the Plant Sale chair for signature.

There are no early Thursday plants sold to volunteers until the plant sale is ready for business (usually early/late afternoon).

Working Wednesday or Thursday before the PS is a good opportunity to see the setup before the arrival of customers (especially helpful for new volunteers) and helping with incoming plants. We'll try to have a general map available to volunteers that shows general locations for groups of plants (i.e, culinary, vines, perennial, rosemarys, pelargoniums, etc.) on Friday morning.

There will be water, coffee, and snacks in the volunteer break area (take a few minutes to rest when you need it). You may purchase a catered lunch on Friday (\$12.50) and/or there will be a garden party lunch on Saturday at no charge for volunteers.

Sales at the Potting Shed are tallied onto sales tickets and paid for at the cashier table along with sales of plants.

Ticketers count plants by size/cost and record totals by group for cashier tally (4 @ \$3, 3 @\$8, etc.). A ticketer will be assigned to the Holding Area.

Cashiers tally all tickets and receive payment by cash, check or credit card.

During the sale, plant sale volunteers take care of the plants and handle ticketing, watering, straightening, taking down signs for sold-out plants, helping customers with their purchases, loading to their cars, overseeing the Holding Area, returning errant wagons, etc., and pointing out reference folks (red vests).

Volunteers are encouraged to learn about cashiering/writing tickets so that workers can fill in as needed based on customer/sales volume during the busy times.

Continued on next page

We always need people to cover areas during lunch breaks.

Shoppers should be encouraged to place and label groups of plants in the Holding Area. Plants can be labeled and stored safely until purchased and/or taken home.

Some shoppers pay for plants but either plan to return and/or just can't get away without purchasing more. Holding area volunteers can write tickets as necessary (cuts down on re-transport of plants).

Volunteers are encouraged to use the Holding Area Friday/Saturday for their plants selected for storage and/or later purchase as well.

If you plan on helping with **teardown**, we suggest working no more than the afternoon on Saturday as it can be a very long day (teardown usually takes a couple of hours pulling down signs, disassembling tables and getting all the leftover plants back to the greenhouse).

Remember this is OUR plant sale, and our customers rely on us to be there for them. As volunteers, you will be best able to let the PS Committee know what's working and what isn't. Please share your thoughts and pass along customer comments. Have a fun time! We couldn't do this without you!

Susan Yancey and Jana Rinehart
Plant Sale Co Chairs

Thyme Well Spent Shoppe

Six more weeks until the big event! Sign-up to work a shift at Thyme Well Spent on Friday and/or Saturday during the Plant Sale. We have opportunities to work as a cashier, general assistant, or a packer. It's an excellent opportunity to earn hours and work inside for a break. Go to the website to pick a time to work. If you have already signed up, we have your information and will be contacting you. We still are in need of a few good jam and jelly makers. Contact Cathy Kietlinski at cathy.kietlinski@gmail.com if you would like to help out making jam or jelly. Also, don't forget we will be collecting seeds at the February meeting. We need your **cleaned** seeds, labeled and in paper or plastic. In addition, be looking through your herb books and magazines to donate to the scholarship fund. The funds earned from the sale of books and magazines go towards supporting an intern at the National Headquarters of the Herb Society. One last note: if you are making hand goods for TWSS you may bring them to the February meeting or the workday on March 9th.

Thank you for everything to do to make our sale a success!

Cathy Nitsch
Thyme Well Spent Shop

CULINARY GROUP

The Culinary Group is continuing its exploration and sampling of American regional cuisine. Texas is the current cuisine. Texas is home to so many different groups of people with their own food traditions. And we are the happy recipients of them all. When my daughter was attending graduate school in Tucson, she was shocked to discover that no one knew what a kolache was! Think how sad life would be without kolaches, deer sausage, pecan pie, frito pie, fried okra, fajitas.

Belinda Weatherly



HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Not All Mints are Minty

We opened 2023 with a full house – 27 attended. Most of the 2022 group returned, and we had four interested in learning more and a few who could not attend in January but plan to join in February. We are very happy to start this year on a positive note.

The presentation topic for the meeting was the botany and chemistry of mint. *Mentha* (mint) is in the Lamiaceae family. This is the 4th genus within the Lamiaceae family that we have studied. There are several species of *Mentha*, but thousands of varieties. Two key species are *m. aquatica* and *m.spicata* which were crossed to form what we know as peppermint. Mints cross and re-cross and can be changed by extreme environments. So, there are probably fewer than 20 'pure' species but are known by different names. Fortunately, we don't have to rely on seeds for new plants as mints send out runners from the parent which can be separated to form new colonies.


Menthol and menthone are the two chemicals that provide the cool and refreshing scent of mint. However, not all mints carry that scent. As a matter of fact, pennyroyal (*m. pulegium*) smells like caraway. Then there are plants that are not in the mentha genus that have the 'minty' aroma. A good example is the popular Mexican Mint Marigold (*tagetes minuta*).

Our mints will be grown in pots because mints tend to spread if not contained. We ended the meeting with a sharing of ideas on drip irrigation systems for pots. Royceanna Kendall, Becky Nichols, and Tom Solis shared their experience with setting up drip irrigation for pots. We left with ideas on how we could DIY-it.

Our next meeting focuses on planting. Growers will receive their mints, pots, and soil. It will be held at the home of Phoebe and Rob Lake.

Madeline Johnson

February 2023

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

March 2023



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26 Newsletter deadline Email to the editor lrowlett@gmail.com	27	28	29	30	31	





PIONEER PATHS

Volume 30

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—Tess Hartman
Secretary—Vacant
Treasurer—Debi Thomas

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers



Herbal Lagniappe en Louisienne April 27-29, 2023

The Herb Society of America has announced that Early Bird Registration is open through March 15, 2023, for the **2023 Annual Meeting of Members** in Baton Rouge, Louisiana! Don't miss this conference and the opportunity to spend time in beautiful Baton Rouge with your HSA friends. Optional Thursday tour, locally focused menu, musical entertainment, seven herbal presentations with an appearance by 18th-century botanist "William Bartram." For more details, see the Herb Society of America website.