

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

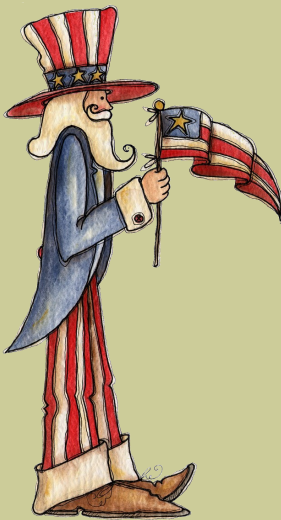
July 3

Thunder Full Moon

—

July 4

Independence Day



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July 10

Board Meeting
Zoom 10-noon

July 2023

Volume 30, Number 11

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: July 13, 2023

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.

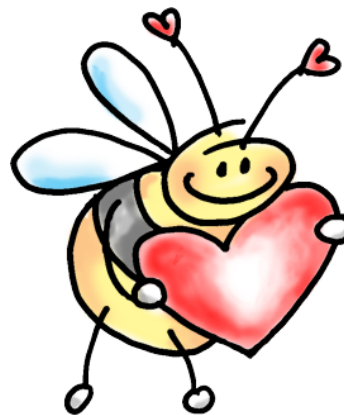
Program: Bee a Friend to Our Pollinators

Speaker: Karl Cottrell
President, Central Texas Beekeepers Association

Angel: Tony Scanapico

Host Team: Kay Scanapico, Carla Lessard, Joann Reichle, and Louise Rice

Lunch: Summer Vegetables



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Wow! This heat is incredible with 102 degrees, counting the humidity of 40%. I've just been outside giving my chickens some ice cubes with worms in them. It sounds yucky, I know, but I need to keep them hydrated with ice, changes of cool water, and watermelon.

As was reported by our new secretary Louise Rice, at the June meeting a show of hands went up first to see who wants to discontinue meeting for the summer months, and then we had a round where members were asked whether they cared if the summer meetings were eliminated. The majority were ambivalent, but then a third round of voting saw that it would be okay not to meet in July and August. June is our yearly business meeting where we vote on new Board members so July was really the month to vote out or in.

The Pioneer Board will meet this month before our Unit meeting, and we will discuss this topic. However, I would like input from anyone and everyone who has an opinion on this subject so please feel free to contact me before the Board meeting. For myself, I will probably not be at the July regular meeting as I have to drive an hour plus and don't love doing that in this heat. The discussion last month included talk of members still getting together socially with visiting gardens or field trips, possibly lunch out. Many members are on vacation these summer months as well.

I think that's it from me. I encourage everyone to keep well hydrated and enjoy life however you can these hot summer days. I have many tomatoes to deal with, and they are delicious. Soon we can replant more, so says Neil Sperry. I will probably cut the tops off one or two of my plants, place them in water to root, and see what happens.

Best,
Kathe Forrest
Chair



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

We are all wishing for a bit of cooler weather and some rain, but I do enjoy these long summer days. Last week, I had special flowers to observe -- but only from 10 p.m. to sunrise. My San Pedro cactus puts on a one-night showy display, and it is almost magical. The San Pedro cactus is a native of the Andean region of South America and requires a decade of growth to begin blooming. This is an early morning photo as the flowers fade away. Although I have several plants, only one of mine is old enough to produce blooms.

If you participated in Fuzzy Butts Day for the Herb Society of America, you undoubtedly know the concern over honeybees in North America. Our speaker this month is Karl Cotrell, the President of the Central Texas Beekeepers Association. He will bring an active demonstration hive and tools for us to observe, and he will suggest forage plants to attract bees to our gardens.

We will meet at the Brenham Presbyterian Church on July 13th at 9:30 a.m., with the presentation at 10:00.

Tess Hartman
Programs Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PIONEER UNIT
June 8, 2023

Kathe Forrest, Chair, welcomed members to the June meeting held at Brenham Presbyterian Church, Brenham, Texas.

Tess Hartman, Vice Chair Programs, introduced the speaker, Linda Rowlett, Pioneer Unit member and Parliamentarian. Linda's program was "Emily Dickinson: The Poet as Gardener and Cook." Linda had a handout of some of Emily's recipes and made those treats for everyone to sample.

Kathe Forest had prepared a short video of the National Education Conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but due to technical difficulties, the video could not be played. She will send it out on the Pioneer Unit Listserv. Thirteen Pioneer Unit members attended the Conference. Kathe met with other Unit Chairs to exchange ideas. Some units take off for the summer, others take off two months, but they may take a field trip, meet at a local restaurant, or visit a member's garden during those months. Currently, our Unit does not meet in August, and Kathe took a survey of hands of those who would like to take off more summer months. Most members do not care if we take off extra month(s) in the summer, so the issue will be brought before the Board at the next Board meeting. Kathe also explained the Green Bridges program, and a pamphlet was available for all members.

Kathe Forest presented Julie Johnson with a pin for all she does for the Pioneer Unit and Festival Hill grounds. Julie posts videos on Instagram and attracts volunteers from the community to work on the Festival Hill grounds. Julie asked for volunteers to sign up to water at Festival Hill.

Susan Yancy will have a meeting with the Plant Sale Committee after lunch.

Diana Sellers, Membership Chair, announced three new members: Shawn Helm, Michael Perkins, and Erica Menconi. Forty-one members attended today. The deadline for membership renewal is June 30. Members can mail their check and renewal application, give it to Diana, or renew on the Pioneer Unit website. Diana encouraged everyone to record their hours on Track-It-Forward and will help anyone to learn to navigate the site. Currently our unit has 3,500 - 3,600 volunteer hours. Diana had 5-year pins for Jana Rinehart and herself.

Ann Lugg explained how to renew your membership on the website and offered to help anyone download the App for Track-it-Forward.

Kathe Forrest and Patty Mills, Hospitality Chair, drew names for the door prizes. The Speaker Angel was Madeline Johnson. The lunch hostesses were Joanna Hagler, Bonnie Lout, and Rob Lake.

There were no other announcements, and Kathe adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Louie Rice
Secretary

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Thank you, Linda Rowlett, for a wonderful presentation about Emily Dickinson. I really didn't know much about Emily, but you brought her to life. I especially liked your Emily dress and apron. And the black bread was really something. I can't begin to imagine making something with that many pounds of ingredients. It was very kind of you to make it for us. Great presentation! Forty-three members were in attendance at the June meeting.

Welcome to our three newest members – Erica Menconi (daughter-in-law of Pat Garrett), Shawn Helm, and Michael Perkins. They completed their joining requirements and became official members in June. Erica's contact information is 7617 Hardcastle Lane, LaGrange, Texas 78945; cell number is 281-948-2620; email address – menconie@gmail.com. In her bio, Erica wrote, "I love to cook with herbs. I want to learn more about them and other interesting topics." The contact information for Shawn Helm and Michael Perkins is 23295 Oak Road, New Ulm, Texas 78950; cell number is 936-230-2593; email address is IM4Tiger@mac.com. In her bio, Shawn wrote, "I have cooked with herbs for 40+ years. I hope to learn more and meet others with the same interests." I look forward to Erica, Shawn, and Michael being members of our organization.

Jill Wilson will become our first new member in July for the 2023-2024 year. She has completed the joining requirements. We will hear more from Jill at the July meeting. Jill's email address is jill@LooLooDesign.com.

Recognition of Member's Anniversary Dates

During the June meeting, Jana Rinehart and Diana Sellers were recognized for their membership tenure. Both joined the HSA Pioneer Unit in June of 2018. Congratulations!!

Membership Renewal Time is Complete

The membership renewal period will be complete by the time you receive this newsletter. I will give a complete accounting of the renewals in the August newsletter. Soon I will be sending all our information to HSA. Later in the Fall, HSA will send out new membership cards.

Herbally Yours,
Diana Sellers
Membership Chair

JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 3 — Mary Reeves

July 26 — Wanda Hubbard

July 29 — Royceanna Kendall



DYEING WITH PLANTS

This summer I have been experimenting with using my dried zinnias and yarrow and with using turmeric powder to dye fabric. I have always wanted to do this, and now with the good possibility that we will have a speaker who uses natural plants as dye at the next Forum, I stepped up my game and tried.

The zinnias I picked last year made a nice yellowish color in the pot, and when I added a mordant to keep it colorfast, my shirt came out a nice yellowish, with some earth tones to it as well.



I put the shirt in the dye bath before the mordant, and the color just washed out. (Remember I am experimenting.) My mordant was simple alum bought at H.E.B.

My granddaughters and I next used turmeric powder which I dissolved in a pot in the sink with very hot water. From a company on Amazon, I bought some very nice 100% cotton flour sack towels and washed them.

Following the videos of Anna McNamara on YouTube, I thought I would try out her folding patterns. (<https://practicalandpretty.com/5-favorite-shibori-folds/>)

The girls folded their own, and as you can see from the pictures on the next page, the patterns are all different.

Continued on next page



My next experiment was with the dried yarrow flower heads which made a lighter yellow. It was the same process with the material sitting in the alum mordant for at least 30 minutes and then into the yarrow.



It was really fun to see what came about, and I encourage you to try it with other or the same herbs/plants or coffee or beets.

Kathe Forrest

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Diana Sellers, Susan Yancey, and Kathe Forrest presented the first of two programs on cooking with mint. Although there are several varieties of great culinary mints, spearmint is the most frequently used savory mint. Our delectable mint samples included spanakopita, mint-flavored Greek meatballs, a sourdough bread incorporating mint and lemon, mojito bars, and buttermint cookies. We drank cold mint tea prepared by Irene Spurrier and refreshing mint lemonade prepared by Julie Johnson. These and other dishes inspired us to add mint more often in our summer cooking.

If you have an abundance of mint and need to store it, you can make a mint-infused herbal vinegar. Mint can also be stored for the short term by making mint ice cubes and then use them in lemonade or tea. Kathe is currently brewing mint extract, which is yet another way to preserve mint for future use.

All the mint varieties in our trial continue to grow. The pace of growth has slowed with the heat, and the mints are wanting to flower. Now is the time to harvest so that the mint plants will be renewed for a second harvest in the Fall.

Many of us are harvesting and drying our mints for use for products to sell in the Thyme Well Spent Shop.

Madeline Johnson



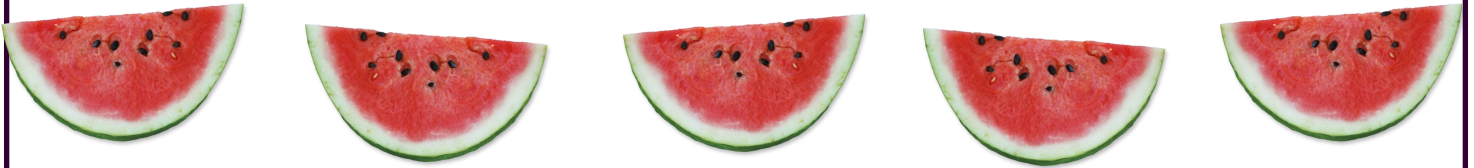
Photos by Julia Johnson of her Strawberry Spearmint before and after trimming

CULINARY GROUP



Because Menke House was occupied by instructors for the summer Festival Hill music school, we met at Belinda's house for our Floribbean cuisine. The food provided an example of the magic that can happen when different cultures mingle and create something new. I learn something every month and expand my (and my family's) pleasure in my cooking! The group decided to postpone our traditional outside Ice Cream Social due to the crazy heat. We will NOT meet in July and August but will reconvene with herbal ice cream/sherbet/sorbet in September. Details later. Stay cool!

Belinda Weatherly



THYME WELL SPENT SHOP

According to Ralph Waldo Emerson, "What is a weed? A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered." So...there is a whole lot of undiscovered virtue at my house this summer! I hope the heat and lack of rain are keeping you inside and dreaming about all the fun March 2024 holds. If you have any ideas for TWSS you are encouraged to let Cathy Kietlinski, Belinda Weatherly, or Diana Sellers know about ways to improve our little shop.

Enjoy your summer and dream of cooler days!

Cathy Nitsch

SENSORY GARDEN

Due to the irrigation added last summer, Sensory Garden plants are doing well despite this summer heat. These photos were taken mid-May after new members Shawn Helm and Michael Perkins helped me weed many areas.

Currently we have numerous weeds growing, partially due to the wonderful rain we received at the end of May and beginning of June. Weeds do not seem to mind these hot temperatures as much as I do.


Please feel free to enjoy the garden and pull some weeds when you have time. In addition, help yourself to any vegetables that need to be picked. I will be planting pumpkin seeds in July with hopes that some will grow and be ready for students by the end of October.

Stay cool.
Cathy Kietlinski



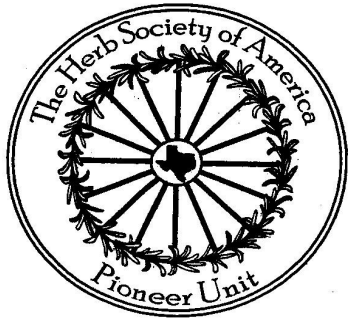
July 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
CG = Culinary Group FH = Festival Hill SG = Sensory Garden	HSG = Horticulture Study Group HB = Herbal Blends					1
2	3	4	5 	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 Pioneer Unit Meeting	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 HSG 10-noon	28	29
30	31					

August 2023

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



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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

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers

Secretary—Louise Rice

Treasurer—Debi Thomas

Cammie Beierle sent this picture showing work the Pioneer Unit Strippers are doing to prepare herbs for use in the products sold in the Thyme Well Spent Shop. She noted that she wished she could include the wonderful fragrance that permeated the room.

