

PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

September 2023

Volume 31, Number 1

September 4
Labor Day

September 23
Autumnal Equinox



September 29
Harvest Full Moon

MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: September 14, 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: Texas Heirloom Bulbs

Speaker: Robert Martinez
Brazos Valley Master Gardeners

Speaker Angel: Carla Lessard

Lunch: Harvest Celebration

Host Team: Leona Marshall, Connie Gwyn, Julia Johnson, Courtney Kieke, and Debi Thomas

IMPORTANT NOTE: The meeting information above is different from the information in the Membership Directory for 2022-2023. This newsletter is correct and reflects an update. We hope to see you at Brenham Presbyterian Church on September 14th!



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Herbies,

I am lying on the beach in Queensland, The Gold Coast. it is windy today, and I almost don't want to write about how beautiful it is because of the heat that you all are enduring in Texas. I will be here a bit longer as I help my son to move.

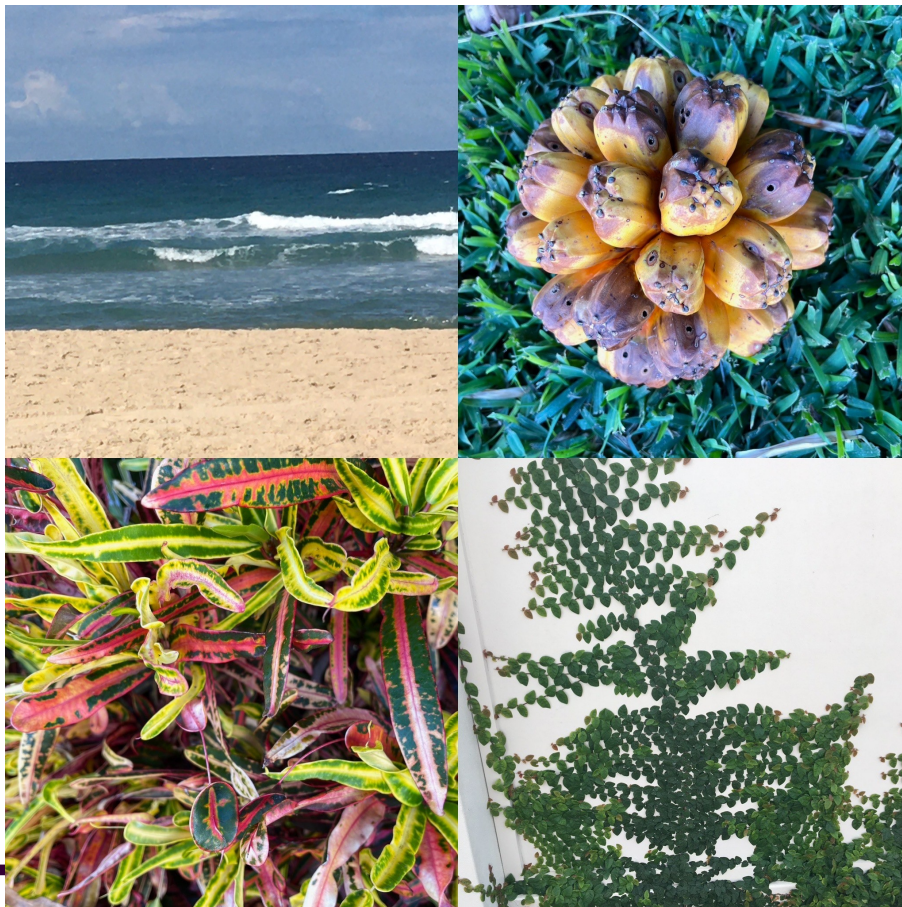
The sky is a light blue today with low clouds; the rain will come in later today. The water color changes from a crystal clear green near shore to a darker green to a deep, deep blue further out; I am going to include some shots of pictures of the beach and the different plants that I have snapped as we walk to favorite cafes.

"Chockers" is a new Aussie saying that I have learned - it means to be full or that something is filled up. The other phrase that I think funny and interesting is when Aussies say "I reckon." Then I feel like I am near Texas.

There is actually a town called Texas out west in Australia. Look it up and check out how it got its name.

That's all from down under.
Take good care

Kathe Forrest
Unit Chair



FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

Please join me in looking for some rain! The heat and drought have been a challenge in the garden this summer, but I am hopeful that will soon change.

I am dreaming of cooler weather and colorful flowers and bulbs. Our speaker for this month is Robert Martinez of the Brazos Valley Master Gardeners, who will present on Texas heirloom bulbs. He will discuss what is best for our area and possibly bring some for sale.

One of my favorite bulbs is the oxblood lily, also known as the "schoolhouse lily" because it blooms in early September. These bulbs were brought by early German and Czech settlers to Texas, but the plant is native to Argentina. This well-traveled lily brightens gardens and yards with its bright red blooms that pop up surprisingly quickly.

Looking forward to our meeting at Brenham Presbyterian Church on September 14th!

Tess Hartman
Programs Chair



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

I hope everyone had a wonderful August! I know it is still hot as blazes and our poor herbs have been suffering. I hope cooler, wetter weather is nearby.

We will start meeting again in September. I'm looking forward to another superb year of programs that our Program Chair Tess has arranged for us. One of the first items we will be tackling is looking at the Proposed Bylaws and the Proposed Rules and Procedures language changes. Please note that the change is in the way the language is written. The Bylaw and Rule are not actually changing. As currently written, the language has been confusing. We need to improve the language so everyone understands that in order to be a member of the Pioneer Unit, you must be a member of the Herb Society of America, which requires paying the HSA membership dues. Please review the proposed changes and be prepared to vote at the September Unit meeting. Send me a text if you have any questions regarding the changes.

Every year during the Membership Renewal process some confusion arises regarding Affiliates and the dues they are required to pay. The confusion arises primarily because the current wording in the Pioneer Unit Bylaws and Rules and Procedures sections is confusing. As the Membership Chair, I proposed at the April Board Meeting to change the wording in the Rules and Procedure Dues section. Then I proposed additional changes to the wording in the Bylaws ARTICLE III Membership Affiliate section. The purpose of the proposed changes is to clarify an Affiliate member's dues to maintain their HSA and Pioneer Unit Membership.

PROPOSED BYLAW ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP, B. 2. AFFILIATE language change:

A member of the Herb Society of America (HSA) who is unable to meet full requirements of Active membership with the Pioneer Unit may apply to the Pioneer Unit Board for Affiliate Membership. A Pioneer Unit Affiliate member must pay the HSA annual membership dues in addition to paying the Pioneer Unit annual dues. An Affiliate member is encouraged to participate in Unit endeavors as able but may not hold office or vote.

Note: An Affiliate member who is a full member of another Herb Society unit and pays the HSA dues through that unit is only required to pay the annual Pioneer Unit dues. In addition, an Affiliate Life member only pays the Pioneer Unit dues.

PROPOSED RULES AND PROCEDURES, 2.DUES language changes:

Active member – must meet the requirements outlined in Bylaws, Article III, B.1. Active.

Dues – Single \$67.00 (\$12 local; \$55 National HSA); **Joint** \$98 (\$18 local; \$80 National HSA)

Affiliate member – must meet the requirements outlined in Bylaws, Article III, B.2. Affiliate

Dues - Single \$67.00 (\$12 local; \$55 National HSA); **Joint** \$98 (\$18 local; \$80 National HSA)

Member in another HSA unit who desires to be an Affiliate member of the Pioneer Unit only pays the local dues of \$12.00.

Life Members of The Herb Society of America only pay local dues.

National dues for Honorary Members are paid by the Pioneer Unit.

Dues paid by a new member shall be prorated locally and nationally for the number of months remaining in the year.

All new members purchase a membership badge for \$10.

Herbally Yours,
Diana Sellers, Membership Chair

HOSPITALITY REPORT

Thanks to all who signed up for the teams for the new year. I do have openings still for those who haven't! November is our Thanksgiving meeting, and we need several more volunteers for it. April and June are also in need of team members.

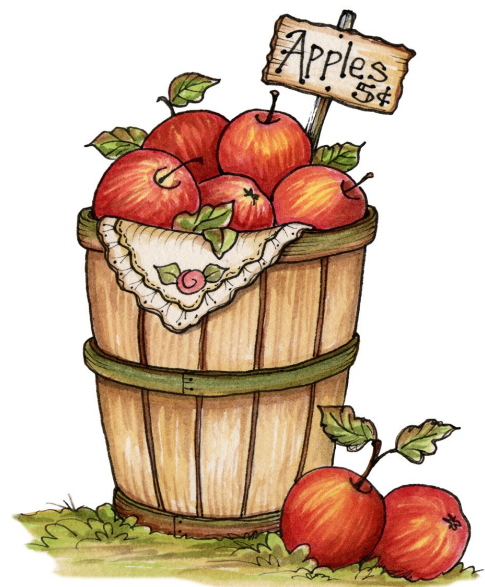
Volunteering for the Host/Hostess teams is a wonderful way for all members to get to know each other as well as earn hours. The lead host contacts the members, coordinates the table decorations and brunch. All team members contribute to table decorating, brunch dishes, setting up brunch and lunch, and clean up.

Please contact Patty Mills at pattymills67@gmail.com or call or text 832-567-8189 to volunteer or for more information.

Patty Mills
Hospitality Chair

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- September 2 — Kay Scanapico
- September 5 — Noreen Barker
- September 7 — Irene Spurrier
- September 8 — Caroll Edwards and Debbie Pruitt
- September 12 — Debi Thomas
- September 13 — Janie Plummer
- September 14 — Joanna Hagler
- September 15 — Pat Cox and Sue Edmundson
- September 22 — Linda Hartson
- September 27 — Connie Gwyn
- September 30 — Georgetta Welch



Irene Spurrier (**September 2**) sent this birthday message: Celebrating my birthday fills me with gratitude for the years I've been given, for my family and friends, and for life's numerous blessings and challenges. Re-joining the Pioneer Unit has given me new and renewed friendships. We share a love of herbs, gardens, and nature. Your kindness and creativity inspire me. Many thanks to each of you.

Below are two photos I took this time last year. Hopefully they are omens of better weather to come.

The first is Salt marsh-mallow (*Kosteletzkya virginica*)

The second is Texas green lily (*Schoenocaulon texanum*)



Pat Cox (**September 15**) wrote: Apart from September being my birthday month, it's also the first Pioneer Unit meeting after the August hiatus, and this year due to the interminable heat and drought the hiatus has seemed twice as long. So I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone and making plans for workshops and trips as well as enjoying our programs and potlucks.

Connie Gwyn (**September 27**) sent the following message: Birthdays do come faster and faster and with more celebrating each year. Life is good for me and my family, just not for my garden beds. Raccoons, possums, armadillos, squirrels, and rabbits have dug and chewed. Plants and wildlife are just trying to survive.

I'm thankful for my gardening friends to inspire me to keep going until the fall rains and cooler temps arrive, and they will.

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Mint as Medicine

Mint as medicine was the August program topic. Did you know that peppermint and spearmint are very different when it comes to medicinal properties? Linda Rowlett, Susan Bame, and Irene Spurrier explained key differences between peppermint and spearmint in folk medicine as well as sharing other uses of mint for health. Peppermint is a stimulant often used to relieve congestion while spearmint is a sedative used as an anticonvulsant. Everyday health benefits from mint tea include invigorating the senses (peppermint) and relaxing tension (spearmint). A few drops of peppermint oil mixed in a carrier (such as olive oil) can soothe itchy skin. Mint is used in dental products because it freshens breath while killing the bacteria that caused it. Although most mints can be used medicinally, there is one mint that you should not use internally – pennyroyal mint – it has proven to be deadly.

All the mints in our study have continued to grow during the triple-digit heat. Maintaining a consistently moist soil for the mints provides the right environment. Some of our group are setting their mint pots in kiddie pools in the shade to maintain the needed moisture. The pools are partially filled and refilled with water as needed. This is an inexpensive solution for watering when you are going to be gone for a couple of days.

We enjoyed brownies with chopped Andes mints added, shortbread cookies with mint, and mint lime ginger splash. The drink provides a healthy boost during these hot days. (See recipes to the right.)

Submitted by Madeline Johnson



EMME'S SCOTCH SHORTBREAD COOKIES

In a large bowl whisk together 5 cups flour with 1 1/3 cups granulated sugar and 1 teaspoon salt. Work in 1 pound sweet butter (vs. salted) and 1 teaspoon almond extract.

Turn out on a floured board and knead until mixture cracks, adding flour if necessary. Roll dough 1/2 inch (or less) thick and cut into rounds or squares. Prick centers with a fork as desired. Bake at 300 degrees on cookie sheets lined with parchment until barely colored, approximately 20-30 minutes.

Irene's notes: The recipe is simple, the results delicious, and it makes many cookies. I often divide the dough, and freeze half of it for later use. Also, once baked, the cookies improve with a day or two, or several, of age stored in a tight tin or jar.

For mint cookies, I used mint extract instead of almond, plus I added finely chopped mint to the dough. Once baked and cooled, I brushed on a thin powdered sugar/milk/mint extract glaze.

In the past, using this basic recipe, I've made lavender shortbread and cinnamon shortbread cookies. Use your imagination and go for it!

Irene Spurrier

MINT AND LIME GINGER SPLASH

2 cups water

2-inch fresh ginger root, thinly sliced [No need to peel the ginger; just make sure it is clean.]

1/2 cup packed fresh mint leaves [I used spearmint.]

1/2 cup honey

1/3 cup lime juice [Fresh is great, but if you are multiplying the recipe, Real Lime works.]

Club soda [Sparkling water could also be used, but I have not tried that.]

Bring the water to a boil, then remove it from the heat and stir in the ginger and mint. Steep for at least 30 minutes, but do not let it get completely cool because you want it warm when you add the honey.

Use a fine mesh sieve or cheesecloth to strain the liquid into another container. Press on the ginger and mint to extract as much flavor as possible. Toss the solids in your compost. Stir in the honey while the mixture is still warm, and then refrigerate until you are ready to serve your drinks.

Stir in the lime juice. To assemble each drink individually, put ice in the glass, then half fill with your mint/ginger/lime mixture. Add an approximately equal amount of club soda. Garnish with lime slices and mint sprigs. Edible flowers would be lovely as well. Enjoy!

Linda Rowlett

CULINARY GROUP



I hope this means this horrible summer will be coming to an end!

The Culinary Group celebrates the beginning of the end of summer 2023 with their herbal ice cream/sherbert/sorbet social. We took July and August off and will be deciding what gustatory adventures to embark on this year. We meet the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 in Menke House. Contact Belinda at blw1071@gmail for details.

Belinda Weatherly

THYME WELL SPENT SHOP

Well, it's still HOT out, and the prospect for rain hasn't been encouraging; however, there is still so much to look forward to soon. Imagine pumpkins, orange everything, spiced lattes, and scarecrows. It's a favorite time of the year, and the best part is that our herbs perk up and gardening doesn't involve sweating!

Please let Cathy Kietlinski or me know how many jars you will need so we can start ordering. In the meantime, stay cool!

Cathy Nitsch
Thyme Well Spent Shop




DON'T FORGET THE SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT GATHERING!

The South Texas Unit is excited to host the South Central District Gathering this year in Houston, Texas, September 29-30.

Join us at the Houston Botanic Garden for the meeting, program, and garden tour. Afterwards, take a field trip to the amazing Skyfarm, a one-acre rooftop garden at POST that was once the Barbara Jordan US Post Office in downtown Houston. Registration details are on the HSA website! As of this writing, there are still spaces available, but registration is limited to 55 people.




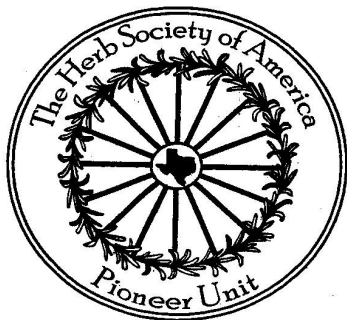
September 2023

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 CG Ice Cream Social	7 Fuzzy Butts Day [choose one]	 8 Fuzzy Butts Day [choose one]	9 Fuzzy Butts Day [choose one]
10 Fuzzy Butts Day [choose one]	11	12	13	14 Pioneer Unit Meeting	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 HSG 10-noon at FH	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 South Central District Gathering—Houston	30 South Central District Gathering—Houston

October 2023



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



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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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