

# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

October 9

Board Meeting  
10:00 a.m. on Zoom

October 28

Hunters Full Moon



October 2023

Volume 31, Number 2

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: October 12, 2023

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

Location: Brenham Presbyterian Church  
900 South Jackson Street, Brenham

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: Getting Children Outside and in the Garden

Speaker: Lisa Whittlesey

Hosts: Phoebe Lake, Carol Edwards, Beverly Green, Shawn Helm, Mike Perkins, and Leah Pearce

Lunch: Harvest Hits



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Cheers everyone,

So happy to have come back to Texas after what seems the worst is over - weatherwise. Most of the plants in my gardens did survive. I am happy to report that with just a little rain they received a couple of weeks ago, the beds are full.

The main things that are up for me in this newsletter report .... taking care of our gardens.

Our dear Julie Johnson, who has really gotten those gardens at Festival Hill in shape, is going to stop working there; therefore, we need someone or several "someones," in charge out there. I know that many of you have been watering and weeding, which is still the main focus at the Festival Hill gardens. But we do need someone who can oversee them. At the October meeting, I hope to see someone stepping forward to take charge. The work will include being on the Pioneer Board, making sure that everything is watered, and arranging volunteer days as Julie has been doing and as Henry Flowers did before her.

In addition, as I wrote in an email, we need volunteers for the Sensory Garden in Brenham for giving the kindergarteners a short tour around that garden this October. I've had only one person reach out to do that. I will have a paper to sign up for those volunteer hours at Thursday's meeting.

Just a short report on the plans for Forum 2024: there has been someone found to do a presentation on dyeing with plants, which will include our herb of the year, Yarrow. We are still searching for presenters to talk about Yarrow with possible topics of medicine or historical uses and how it is used as food.

As you will see in Tess Hartman's information below about this October's speaker, the speaker is an expert on getting kids into the garden. Maybe you could reach out to your daughters and sons who are interested in starting a garden with their kids. Invite them to join us and learn ways to do that as an enjoyable experience.

Kathe Forrest  
Unit Chair



## FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

At times, we find beauty and resilience in the strangest of places. Walking around New Ulm, I discovered this cassia plant growing out of a parking lot by the old fire station. In this long, hot and dry summer, this plant which normally prefers moist and rich soil is thriving and surviving. Cassia is also known as Chinese cinnamon, and the bark can be harvested and ground for baking. I hope to harvest some seed pods this fall and try this plant in my yard, and maybe preserve some seeds for our sale in March.

Our speaker for October will be Lisa Whittlesey, the coordinator of the International Junior Master Gardener Program and a creator of award-winning curricula to inspire children to get outside and involved with gardening. She has been featured in major publications and has appeared on HGTV. Please join us at Brenham Presbyterian Church on October 12.

Tess Hartman  
Programs Chair





## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

I was still vacationing so was not able to attend the September meeting. Cammie Beierle graciously stepped in for me to serve as the Membership Chair. Thanks so much, Cammie!! I really appreciate your willingness to help. Sounds like we had a great presentation on bulbs. I don't know much about bulbs, but I was fortunate to inherit 3 different bulbs when we purchased our house in Round Top – narcissus (winter bloom), Byzantine Gladiolus (April bloom), and some hurricane lilies (blooms with first rain in September). The Byzantine Gladiolus are particularly spectacular with astounding purple flowers. It spreads bigger and bigger every year despite drought and freezing temperatures. (See photo below.)

Forty-two members and 2 guests attended the September meeting. Our guests were Leslie Conrads from Houston and Wendy Matthews from Austin. Wendy will be joining the Pioneer Unit as an Affiliate member. More information about Wendy next month.

The Bylaw changes were unanimously approved by the membership. You will see the changes in the new Directory, along with the changes the Board made to the Rules and Procedures. The Directory should be available at the October meeting.

Herbally Yours,  
Diana Sellers  
Membership Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING  
HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
PIONEER UNIT  
September 14, 2023

Kathe Forrest, Chair, was on vacation, so Tess Hartman, Vice Chair Programs, welcomed members to the September meeting held at Brenham Presbyterian Church, Brenham, Texas. Tess then introduced the speaker, Robert Martinez from the Brazos Valley Master Gardeners. Mr. Martinez had an interesting and entertaining program on "Texas Heirloom Bulbs," and he brought some bulbs to sell to the members.

After the program, Tess presented the proposed language changes in the **By-Laws, Article III, Membership, B. 2. Affiliate**, and the **Rules and Procedures, 2. Dues** for the membership to vote on. These changes should clarify the different membership levels and the dues paid for each level. Cathy Nitsch made a motion to accept the proposed language changes, Linda Rowlett seconded the motion, and it was passed by the membership.

Tess informed everyone our October meeting will be at Brenham Presbyterian Church.

Patty Mills, Hospitality Chair, still needs volunteers for hostess teams for April and September 2024. Patty also notified the members who would like to help strip herbs that they can do so at her home on the 4th Thursday of this month.

Belinda Weatherly asked members to think of things to make for the Thyme Well Spent Shop. She had 3 dish towels that Diana Reed took to embroider.

Cammie Beierle, filling in for Diana Sellers, Membership Chair, announced we had 42 members and two visitors, Wendy Matthews and Leslie Conrads.

Cammie and Patty drew names for two door prizes. The Speaker Angel was Carla Lessard. The lunch hostesses were Leona Marshall, Connie Gwyn, Julia Johnson, Courtney Kieke, and Debi Thomas.

Cathy Kietlinski reported that she needs help watering plants at the Sensory Gardens while she is on vacation at the end of September and beginning of October. If it rains, watering would not be necessary. She also needs volunteers to repair plant stakes.

The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

Respectfully submitted,  
Louise Rice  
Secretary



## FESTIVAL HILLS GARDENS

I would like to thank all of you for your encouragement and support of my position at Festival Hill Institute. Unfortunately after this summer I have realized that I am unable to continue to keep up with the gardens there and will be leaving Festival Hill in the coming weeks.

If anyone has ideas on how we can help care for the Gardens at Festival Hill as a volunteer effort, we can discuss them at our next meeting.

Thank you,  
Julia Johnson



## HOSPITALITY

Remember that the November meeting is our Thanksgiving meeting. At the October meeting, I will have sign up sheets for what you plan to contribute. If you are not attending, please email me what dish you want to bring as soon as possible. We really don't want to have 18 corn casseroles!!

Thanks again for your support, and enjoy this "fall" weather!

Patty Mills

## THYME WELL SPENT SHOP

Looking for a fun way to contribute to the Pioneer Unit? Consider being the Thyme Well Spent Shop manager. It's the best way to meet wonderful people; most of the work can be done from home; and you'll get tons of volunteer hours!

Shadow the manager during the 2024 sale and then take over completely in 2025. For more information, check with Cathy Nitsch.

Cathy Nitsch  
979.421.9980 home  
281.235.5078 cell



## HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

### Using Mint in Crafts, Personal Care Products, and Pesticides

Tory Farley, Royceanna Kendall, and Patty Mills presented the program on non-culinary and non-medicinal uses of mint. Tory began the presentation by listing some of the crafts that can be made using mint, such as candles, bath soaks, and lip balm. Tory distributed a homemade soap containing mint (recipe below). Royceanna followed by explaining how peppermint spray can ward off mice and other unwelcome guests in your home. A simple spray containing peppermint essential oil will do the trick. Patty provided the special treat of homemade buttermints made from our homegrown mints. Each of us took home a bar of mint soap made by Tory and a vial of Immunity Boost Deodorant made by Royceanna.

Our mints have outgrown their 5-gallon containers and most of the varieties are providing much needed nectar for pollinators. The slightly cooler daytime temperatures and some rain have helped stimulate Fall growth.

Prepared by Madeline Johnson  
Photos from Phoebe Lake

#### Tory's Simple Mint Soap

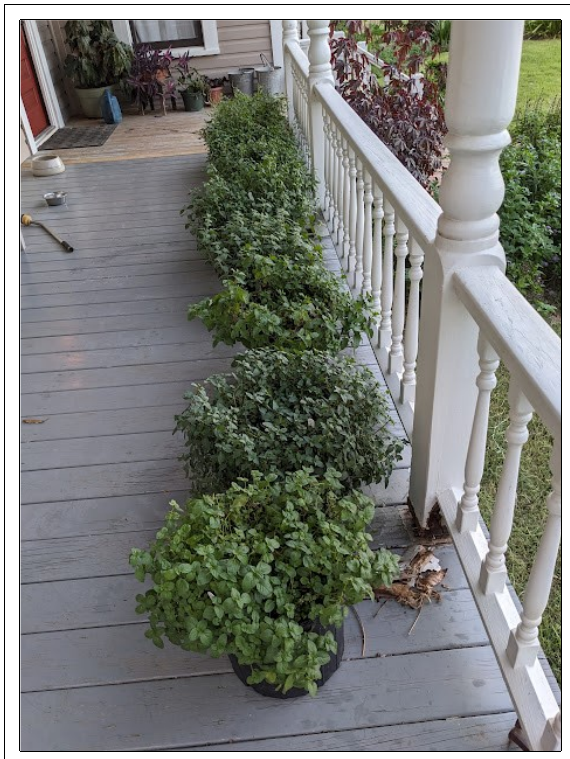
Shea butter soap base

1-2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

6-10 drops of peppermint essential oil

Soap mold.

Melt the shea butter soap base in 30 second intervals in the microwave until it is liquified. Use a microwave safe container, like a glass Pyrex measuring cup, that makes it easy to mix and pour. Stir after every 30 second interval to help everything melt evenly.





## CULINARY GROUP

Culinary is continuing its exploration of herbs and food this year. October is "simple and quick" (with herbs) and November will be "pantry meals" (with herbs). If you are sensing a theme - you are right. This year we are aiming for herbal deliciousness on the table in '30'. We will also be exploring soups, "eat one-freeze one," and "meals for two" (with herbs). Come join us. For more info, text Belinda at 713-398-0994.

Belinda Weatherly



## HERBAL BLENDS

Our group strips the members' herbs for use in many of the blends sold at the Thyme Well Spent Shop at our Plant Sale. This month Noreen Barker, Pat Cox, Joanna Hagler, Ginger Heath, Carla Lessard, and Patty Royal brought herbs and willing hands to my house. We had great conversation and got lots done! We do miss our Kay Scanapico who has led this group for many years, and we are hoping she will continue to join us at times!

Our plan is to meet the third Thursday in October again at my home.

Patty Mills



Basil — ready for use in herbal blends

## October Birthdays

- October 5 — Ginger Heath
- October 6 — Ann Lugg
- October 13 — Carla Lessard
- October 14 — Mary Ann Hillegeist
- October 17 — Pat Garrett
- October 23 — Jan Hughes
- October 27 — Betty Pior
- October 28 — Joyce Caddell
- October 30 — Patty Royal



**Ann Lugg** (October 6) sent the adjacent picture and wrote the following: "After the brutal summer we just endured, it makes me very happy to move into somewhat cooler temperatures. However, I'm really looking forward to those perfect fall days when the highs are no more than 80 degrees! I just had the pleasure of spending time with fellow Pioneer Unit members at the South Central District gathering. It was so nice to wander the Botanic Garden in Houston with such knowledgeable women! I look forward to another great year of learning from them and other members, as I have so much to learn. Who knew you could be this old and still not know so much? "



**Betty Pior** (October 27) sent a selfie and this message: "Well, this is a big b day for me. Turning 70!! Never thought I'd make it this long. Ha! Love the herb society activities and learning lectures."


# 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 HB Patty Mills	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

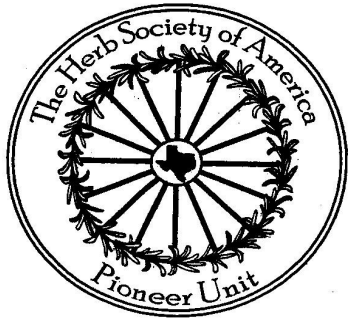


# November 2023

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5	6	7	8	9 Pioneer Unit Meeting	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 HSG 10-noon at FH	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		







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Volume 31

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

### Photos from the South Central District Gathering

