



# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

May 2024

Volume 31, Number 9

May 1  
May Day

—  
May 5  
Cinco de Mayo

—  
May 12  
Mothers' Day



May 23  
Corn Planting  
Full Moon

—  
May 27  
Memorial Day

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: May 9, 2024

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

Location: Service Building  
Festival Hill  
248 Jaster Road, Round Top

Directions: From Highway 290, take Texas 237 south 6.6 miles to Jaster Road. Turn right on Jaster Road. Turn left into the parking lot and find the Service Building across from the Hall.

Program: Spagyric for the 21st Century

Speaker: Caroline Riley  
Owner, Mutable Earth Botanicals

Hosts: Pat Garrett, Carla Lessard, Wendy Matthews, Erica Menconi, and Jill Wilson

Lunch: Picnic lunch provided by the Unit (See Hospitality, page 5)



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Herbies,

What keeps me going through these dreary (without sun) days are my bountiful plants and herbs.

Today I planted a rose, Belinda's Dream, and now have 4 pink, 1 red, and a yellow. The roses continue to bloom, and the vegetable garden keeps growing with all the rain.

I was at Festival Hill for a meeting and walked around the gardens as we decorated for Mary Reeves with ribbons of all colors (lots of pink and lavender). They are magnificent right now, and I noticed changes to the Shakespeare Garden as well as the walls in the Mary Garden. I am pleased at the return to greatness in these spots after the freezes and lack of resources. Happy that our May meeting will be on the grounds of Festival Hill.

There will be a table set up with pictures of our dear Mary, a founder of our Unit. As Pat Garrett said, Mary represents the history of our Unit from day one until May 2024. If anyone would like to add to the table, with a story of Mary or a memento you may have (one member showed me a letter and gift from Mary last week), and want to share that, please feel free to do so.

The Board met for 3 hours on April 17th with lots of discussion, but nothing decided per the Herb Sale and Forum. Diana has numbers on hours worked which was asked for at the last Unit meeting. We will take a straw vote on the sale at the May meeting.

I have spoken to the principal at Brenham Elementary regarding the Sensory Garden and sharing costs and also getting them involved in educating the children. I will see if he has any answers for me this week and report back to you, the members.

The Unit is paying for lunch at the May meeting. This is a Thank you for all the hard work done at the Plant Sale and Thyme Well Spent. See Patty's remarks about this and desserts.

I hope many of you will make it by the Pioneer Unit table at the Bee Festival in New Ulm to support our volunteers and enjoy the day – looking like no rain for that Saturday, May 4th.

I look forward to seeing you all and note that you are my support not only for such "Herbal" learning experiences, but for sharing and friendship that keeps me uplifted, keeps me going.

Best,

Kathe Forrest  
Chair (for two more months)



## FROM THE PROGRAMS CHAIR

When daylilies start blooming, I know a hot Texas summer is right around the corner. I am enjoying these warm -- and thankfully rainy -- days. My black-chinned hummingbirds are still hanging around, enjoying salvia and russelia.

We will meet at Festival Hill on May 9 to hear Caroline Riley speak on Spagyrics. Caroline is the owner of Mutable Earth Botanicals in Austin and is an herbalist and expert on permaculture. She was our keynote speaker at our Herbal Forum in 2023 and was incredibly well received. Get ready to enjoy our May meeting and picnic lunch!

Tess Hartmann  
Programs Chair



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Forty-one members and six guests attended the April meeting. Kathe Forrest presented "Homeopathy for Plants." Fascinating topic. She taught us how to make a concoction using snails (boiled and roasted) that can be used to spread in our gardens to get rid of the other snails. With all the recent rain, snails and slugs have shown up in force in my yard. As I pick them out of my beds, I warn them that they will soon become the concoction that is spread as a deterrent for their friends if they don't leave soon. I'm not sure they realize the peril they are in.

**Welcome to our guests:** Kim Taylor, Kathleen Marken, Serena Speaker (guest of Susan Bame), Toni Kirkpatrick, Deb Miller, and Sandy Pillion (guest of Jo Ann Reichle). Several of the guests indicated they are interested in becoming members. We look forward to working with you.

**Membership Renewal Time is Here:** The Membership Renewal process has started. Five members submitted renewals in April. About 15 members have already renewed on line. Good start! The due date to submit renewals is May, and it would be super great if we could finish this process quickly. Why do we start this process in May? The Pioneer Unit's year is July 1 through June 30. The Herb Society of America requires units to submit their membership forms and dues by July 1st, so by the beginning of June, units start compiling their reports. We submit them to HSA by the end of June, along with a check. Lots of steps!

You have three options for renewing, and all 3 are acceptable:

**Renew Online** - submit the renewal form and money online. Ann Lugg has the online form ready to go. The form can be found behind the Forms tab on the Pioneer Unit website (<https://www.herbsocietypioneer.org>).

**Mail to Pioneer Unit PO Box** - print and complete the renewal form; mail it and your check to the Pioneer Unit, P.O. Box 223, Round Top, Texas 78954.

**Turn in at the May (preferable) or June Meeting** - print and complete the renewal form. Give it and a check to Diana Sellers during the meeting.

Make checks payable to HSA Pioneer Unit. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact Diana Sellers at 512-461-7175 (text or call) or you can email me at [sellers2000@yahoo.com](mailto:sellers2000@yahoo.com). Whether you choose the category of **Active** member or **Affiliate** member, the total dues are still \$67 (single) or \$98 (joint), unless you are an Active member of another unit. Then you only pay the \$12 to be an Affiliate member of our unit.

**Volunteer Hours:** Capturing each person's volunteer hours is important because it shows us what it takes to run the Pioneer Unit, so don't forget to enter your hours in Track It Forward. If you need some help, you can also send me the dates and times that you volunteered, and I will enter the information for you. Most important is I want to be sure that we capture all the hours that everyone volunteered. We do so much great work!!

**Board Members Needed:** As the Membership Chair for the past 4 years, I have come know all of the Pioneer Unit members. That's been my favorite part of being the Membership Chair. I've also realized what a talented group of members we have. Each of you has unique and amazing skills and knowledge. The Pioneer Unit needs your talents to help keep us moving forward. From time to time, I attend the HSA Leadership Meetings and hear about a unit that has stopped meeting due to lack of membership involvement. How sad. We don't want that to happen to us.

It is once again time to elect a new slate of Board Members to serve for the next 2 years. All Active members are eligible to hold a position. Please take a minute today and consider how you might serve, then call Linda Rowlett and let her know what position you would like to serve in. The Pioneer Unit needs you. It might seem scary, but there are many members who can give you advice as you navigate learning the position you decide to take on. I was a little concerned when I decided to be the Membership Chair, asking myself "What have you done?" But it has been a rewarding experience. I'm glad I did it!



Herbally Yours,  
Diana Sellers  
Membership Chair

## HOSPITALITY

Our May meeting will be held in the Festival Hill chapel with brunch and lunch served in the classroom area (where TWSS is located). In honor of our member Mary Reeves, and to thank our volunteers for successful plant and Thyme Well Spent sales, the Unit is providing a picnic lunch for our May meeting. We will have sandwiches, chips, and drinks.

We are asking that several members contribute desserts to share -- especially anything that reminds you of Mary. Please let me know what you would like to bring, and once we have a sufficient number of desserts, I will put a notice on the listserv. Plates and forks will be available for even gooey desserts!

I will also have Host/Hostess Team signup sheets for the coming year at this meeting and at the June meeting. If you have any preferences prior to these meetings, please email or text me.

Thanks so much for all your support!

Patty Mills  
Hospitality Chair

## MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT APRIL 11, 2024

The Unit meeting was held at St. John's United Church of Christ, Burton, Texas. Tess Hartman, Vice Chair Programs, introduced Kathe Forrest, our Unit's Chair, who presented the program "Homeopathy for the Garden known as Agrohomeopathy."

Kathe then introduced Debi Thomas, Treasurer, who presented a preliminary report on the March plant and TWSS sale. The profit is approximately \$30,000, about \$10,000 more than 2023. There are still expenses to be recorded.

Julie Johnson needs help sorting the plant sale labels. She suggested it could be done after the meeting today, or members could meet after the May meeting. About 30 students from Round Top came to Festival Hill and Julie Johnson, Courtney Kieke, and their husbands, Chris and David, showed the students the gardens. After the tour, the students helped them put out mulch in the gardens. Round Top Family Library (RTFL) is hosting garden classes this summer for 3rd – 6th graders. There will be two classes a week between 2:30 – 5:00 p.m. Julie has volunteered for June, but volunteers are needed for July. If anyone would like to help, contact Kelia at the RTFL for more information.

Jana Rinehart said it was a great Plant Sale, fun, and Julie did a great job. The Pottery Shed did well and the new location by the cashiers made the Pottery Shed more visible for the customers.

Cathy Nitsch announced there are items left from the TWSS that are offered for half-price at today's meeting. Cathy highlighted the beautiful cards Julie Johnson made that are for sale for only \$4.00. Cathy thanked all those who worked in the shop and stated everyone had a fun time.

Kathe informed the members that there will be a board meeting on April 17th. One item on the agenda is to discuss having the plant sale just one day with or without lectures or to continue holding it for two days, as in the past, with the lectures on Saturday. Kathe needs to let Lamar Lentz at Festival Hill know today about the dates and herb of the 2025 year which is chamomile. Most members would like to continue as we have been in the past. Belinda Weatherly thinks it would be nice to have more data such as: are Friday sales more than Saturday and does the Unit need the money? Tom Solis thinks the Plant Sale should continue as it is because it is a great way to attract new members and hopefully younger members with more energy. Jana pointed out that people who come annually would be disappointed if it were held for one day. Tess Hartman pointed out that the LaGrange paper had an article on our Plant Sale that was quite entertaining and positive. Cathy Nitsch pointed out that everyone works hard for this fundraising event, but the Unit is not spending the money. The money should be spent on scholarships or other projects and not just sitting in the bank. Kathe then asked for suggestions on how to spend the money the Unit has. Someone asked if the Unit is still supporting the project at Prairie View A&M. One of the guests suggested sponsoring a program at Brookwood.

Cathy Kietlinski does most of the work at the Sensory Garden, but Brenham Elementary staff is not very receptive to allowing the students more education time in the gardens. Julie and Debi Meschwitz both pointed out that the schools have their schedules already made out for the school year and do not have time to include the Sensory Garden. Belinda pointed out she is a Master Naturalist and this group found out things work well if you can get the school schedule, work around the schedule, and do all the work. Kathe suggested working with the Round Top school.

Kathe passed around a sign-up sheet for the New Ulm Bee Festival on May 4, at 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. She wants to continue to do things at the area libraries to bring in new members.

Ann Lugg said we may be able to cut our advertising expenses by cultivating a relationship with Jay White at Texas Gardner magazine. Jay has a lot of followers on Instagram and if the Unit's plant sale could be mentioned there, we could get a lot more coverage. Tom Solis suggested an article in the Round Top newspaper and Round Top magazines.

Diana Sellers, Membership Chair, announced 41 members attended and six guests: Kim Taylor, Kathleen Marken, Serena Speaker, Toni Kirkpatrick, Deb Miller, and Sandy Pillion. Diana next showed items left at the Plant Sale and TWSS, hoping to find the owners present at today's meeting. She reminded members that membership renewal dues are due. Ann Lugg will have the Pioneer Unit website set-up to accept renewal dues by Monday. Diana has sent out an email on how to record volunteer hours on the "Tract-it-Forward" website.

Next month's meeting will be at Festival Hill. Caroline Riley will be the speaker. She is an herbalist from Austin who spoke at the 2023 Forum. Due to the limited kitchen space, Patty Mills, Hospitality, suggested everyone bring items that do not need refrigeration or heating, such as picnic dishes. We may eat outside if the weather cooperates. Today's hostess team is Cammie Beierle, Bonnie Lout, Pat Cox, Carroll Edwards, Jo Ann Reichle, Debi Meschwitz, and Connie Gwen. Names were drawn for door prizes.

Susan Bame, Archives/Rosemary, asked members to inform her if they find out a member is ill or lost a loved one so that she can send cards.

Respectfully submitted,  
Louise Rice, Secretary



## MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 1 — Julia Johnson  
 May 2 — Shawn Helm  
 May 9 — Louise Rice  
 May 26 — Karen Springer  
 May 31 — Tom Solis



**Julia Johnson** (May 1) sent the photograph to the left and the following message and quotation:

I have enjoyed watching the poppies this year, as they burst forth in so many beautiful variations of color! I love capturing their beauty and sharing it with others!

"You have to remember to be thankful. But in May, one simply can't help being thankful that they are alive, if for nothing else."

— Lucy Maud Montgomery

**Shawn Helm** (May 2) sent the adjacent photograph and the following wonderful quotation:

"May is the month of expectation, the month of wishes, the month of hope."

— Emily Brontë



**Karen Springer** (May 26) sent the lovely photograph of "a surprise butterfly moment in my garden."



## HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

At the April meeting of the Horticulture Study Group, we learned about harvesting and storing rosemary. Julie Johnson, Courtney Kieke, and Martha Neva provided us with new and old ideas on how to store rosemary. (See photo.) Drying is probably the best way, but freezing rosemary in water makes adding it to a summer drink very easy. (See photo.) Freezing rosemary in butter with a mix of other herbs is easy to add to soups and other dishes.

The nine varieties of rosemary that we are growing this year are planted and growing slowly. A couple of our growers lost their Foresteri Rosemary to unknown causes. Sometimes, a plant when it arrives from a nursery is already weak. Nevertheless, we still have plenty of Foresteri rosemary growing. Overall, the plants are healthy. See photo of Forseteri Rosemary taken in April.

Madeline Johnson





## REMEMBERING MARY REEVES




July 3, 1934 (Macon, Georgia) -  
April 22, 2024 (Highlands, Texas)

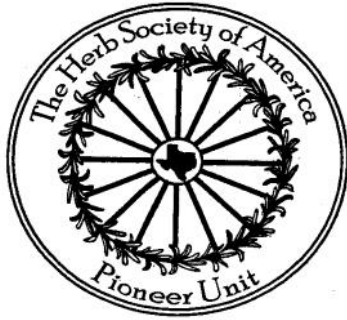
# May 2024

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

# June 2024



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 CG 10:00 Menke House	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 Pioneer Unit Annual Meeting	14	15
16 	17	18	19	20 EdCon HSA	21 EdCon HSA	22
23	24	25	26	27 HSG 10:00	28	29
30						



## PIONEER PATHS

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 Hartmann  
Secretary—Louise Rice

Vice Chair Membership—Diana Sellers

Treasurer—Debi Thomas



### JULY GATHERING

As you may recall, last year it was proposed that we NOT meet in July. However, the majority of members desired to get together, even if it's not a regular meeting. Irene Spurrier volunteered to plan that gathering. With members' suggestions and help, here's the outcome.

**WHERE:** Antique Rose Emporium  
10000 FM 50  
Brenham, Texas 77833

**WHAT:** Explore the gardens and gift shop; learn from garden manager Marie Jenkins' presentation; and enjoy a catered box lunch

**WHEN:** Thursday, July 11th  
9:30 - noon

Mark your calendars now. More details will be in the June newsletter.

If you'd like to help with this gathering, please contact Irene. Thanks!