



# PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America  
Pioneer Unit

May 2026

Volume 33, Number 9

May 1  
May Day  
Corn Planting Full Moon



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May 5  
Cinco de Mayo

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May 10  
Mothers Day

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May 25  
Memorial Day

## MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

- Date: May 14, 2026
- Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet  
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting
- Locations: Service Building and Chapel  
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: Growing Central Texas Herbs
- Speaker: Cristen Andrews
- Angel: Cathy Nitsch
- Hosts: Madeline Johnson, Leslie Conrads, Ann Lugg, Linda Rowlett, and Belinda Weatherly
- Lunch: Picnic lunch at Festival Hill: Assorted salads, bottled water, and bottled tea will be provided.

**Bring a plant from your garden to share. Pick a plant to take home.**



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It's Time to Celebrate – We have so many things to be thankful for. As mentioned in my April newsletter article, everyone worked really hard to make our March Event extremely successful. We've also had such great meetings all year due to program presentations and the hostess groups making each meeting so much fun. It's time for a reward.

Our May meeting will be held at Festival Hill for our annual picnic. I talked with some of the May Hostess Team members – Madeline Johnson, Linda Rowlett, Ann Lugg, and Connie Gwyn, and we decided a catered picnic would be a wonderful way to say 'Thanks, Job Well Done' to all our members. Nicole Petrie, the Chef at Festival Hill, will be providing a luncheon of assorted salads and relishes.

In lieu of door prize drawings, we will have a plant swap for whoever would like to participate. Bring a plant of your choice to participate.

Our day will start in the School House #1 and #2 for our usual gathering time. Then we will head to the Edith Bates Old Chapel for a presentation by Christen Andrews and our Business Meeting. Following the presentation, we will return to School Room #9 for the buffet lunch. Bring a lawn chair so you can take your lunch outdoors and visit with members under the beautiful trees. (Note: I have put in a request for it to not rain that one day or at least wait until 2:00 p.m.)

### Upcoming Events

Membership Renewal – Yes, it's once again that time of the year. It starts in May. In an effort to make sure everyone's contact information is correct in the Directory, I need all members to complete a renewal form this year. You sometimes move, change your email address or change your cell number, and sometimes I don't get that information for the Directory. Also, please complete the form with your very best handwriting. I know my handwriting can be impossible to read at times. As with last year, we will only accept checks or cash for renewals, no credit cards. See the Membership article for more information.

### Hospitality Sign-up Sheets

It's time to begin planning for next year. Connie Gwyn will have Hostesses and Speaker Angel sign-up sheets at the May meeting. Please bring your calendars. We have to have this figured out before the 2026-2027 Directory can be published. It's an easy way to obtain some hours for the required 20 volunteer hour requirement.

### Remembering

Two of our members, Caroll Edwards and Linda Hartson, passed away recently. We will miss them, the joy they brought us and the fun we experienced with them. Please see the 'In Remembrance' article in this newsletter.



Flowers sent from the Pioneer Unit for Caroll's service

**It's Spicer in Texas 2026 EdCon** - 16 Pioneer Unit members attended the 2026 EdCon in San Antonio. We had lots of fun and listened to some very good presentations. Our two Unit Scholarship attendees will be giving presentations in October to tell us about their experience. The other attendees are invited to also talk at that meeting about their experiences.



I'm truly grateful for all our fantastic Pioneer Unit members. You're truly the best. I'm looking forward to our next year.

See you at the May Picnic!  
Diana Sellers  
Chair, Pioneer Unit

## FROM YOUR PROGRAMS CHAIR

The Herb Society Pioneer Unit will gather on May 14th at 10 a.m. for an engaging program at Festival Hill. The presentation will be led by Cristen Andrews of Small Town Farm in San Marcos. Although many of us have had the pleasure of hearing Cristen speak several times, her depth of knowledge and practical expertise always make her programs fresh, enjoyable, and full of new insights. Attendees can look forward to another informative and inspiring session.

We will meet at Festival Hill, with the presentation taking place in the Edythe Bates Old Chapel after the meet and greet in the School House Rooms 1 and 2. See you there!

Tory Farley  
Programs Chair



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Dear all!

May is our big push for membership renewal!! I'll have short forms for you to fill out completely this year, just to make sure all your information is complete for the directory. Please bring your check made out to HSA/PU for \$67/individual, \$98/joint, \$90/business.

I have to say, if you are going to Las Vegas you want to take Leslie Conrads with you! Karen Price, Julia Johnson, Susan Yancy, Diana Sellers, and I sat at the table with Leslie at EdCon when they drew the door prizes. We had 11 tickets drawn from our table with Leslie having 7 of those! Julia's was the first ticket drawn. Susan and I did not have a ticket drawn. EdCon was a great time of learning!!

Our April meeting was so fun! So much energy and excitement! We had 43 members and 9 guests: Pamela Austin, Tressie Roark, and George Crosby all came with Connie Gwyn; Valerie Banik; Kathy Milenki-Hollis was sent by Swee Leng Rapatz; Frances Gorman came with Julia Johnson; Galin Morgan came with Belinda Weatherly (and Swee); Margie O'Brien came with Tess Hartman, and Sheila Ripple.

We also welcomed two new members:

- Robin Greer (Gary), 6860 Gibbs Creek Road, Chappell Hill, Texas 77426, 713-501-2567, 611rrb@gmail.com, birthdate July 23. Robin is a member of the Bluebonnet Master Gardeners Association.
- Jeanne Schilling (Rick), 2222 Roznov Rd, Fayetteville, Texas 78940, (home) 979-249-5664/(cell) 979-966-7358, jeanne2233@yahoo.com, birthdate March 2. Jeanne is like me when I joined: excited to learn everything about herbs.

Please add this information to your directory and introduce yourself!

I'm looking forward to swapping plants with you this month!!

Cammie Beierle  
Membership Chair

# MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING

## HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT

April 9, 2026

The April meeting of the Pioneer Unit was held at Brenham Presbyterian Church, Brenham, Texas.

Diana Sellers, Unit Chair, opened the meeting. Phoebe Lake shared the sad news of the passing of Carol Edwards. Carol's generosity and cheerful spirit will be missed.

Tory Farley introduced our speaker, Mark Merriwether Vorderbruggen, Ph.D. Mark is the author of the book Foraging Texas and the website www.foragingtexas.com where readers can learn more about foraging and the uses of plants commonly found in our area. Mark distinguished between tisanes, tinctures, and salves as methods for getting the most benefit from specific plants. It was an interactive presentation as the audience asked questions about how to best use the plants they grow.

Cammie Beierle, Membership Chair, welcomed 10 guests. New members Robin Greer, Jeanne Shilling, and Karen Bookout were welcomed. Royceanna Kendall celebrated 10 years of membership. Members were reminded to renew their membership. Please bring a check for \$67.00 for individual membership or \$98.00 for joint membership to the May meeting. Diana asked that everyone complete the membership form so the information in the directory will be accurate. Cammie shared news of the passing of longtime member Bob Sowers. Our thoughts are with his wife Georgia.

Royceanna Kendall, Treasurer, reported gross sales of approximately \$80,000 from the Plant Sale and TWSS. Final tabulation will be shared when all invoices have been paid. Our bank balance is a close comparison with last year's even as our charitable giving has increased.

Pat Cox, Education Chair, welcomed members to join the field trip to the gardens of Henry Flowers and to the Sensory Garden at Brenham Elementary School.

Julia Johnson, Pharmacy Garden Chair, thanked members for volunteering at the Plant Sale/TWSS/Forum. The contractor has finished his portion of the greenhouse project. She reported that Round Top-Carmine Elementary students toured Festival Hill gardens, planted a plant, and then took one home.

Diana noted that this year there were 92 Forum attendees. She thanked Jana Rinehart for the baked cookies and Shawn Helm for her assistance with all the details. Noreen Barker took leftover snacks from the Plant Sale to teachers at Round Top-Carmine Elementary. The staff was very appreciative.

Debi Meschwitz asked for volunteers for the last event of the school year with students at Brenham Elementary.

Hostesses Patty Mills, Becky Nichols, Tess Hartman, and Joanna Hagler served a delicious lunch.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joanna Hagler  
Secretary



## Pioneer Unit Board Meeting Summary

April 7, 2026

Present: Diana Sellers, Cammie Beierle, Royceanna Kendall, Joanna Hagler, Susan Bame, Pat Cox, Connie Gwyn, Phoebe Lake, Julia Johnson, Ann Lugg, Leslie Conrads, and Tess Hartman.

Minutes: The minutes of the January 6, 2026, meeting were accepted.

Membership Report: Jill Quimby, Karen Bookout, and Joy Kamani were approved as new members. A motion was unanimously approved to reduce the price of the membership badge to \$5.00. The membership renewal process has begun. Members will complete the membership form so accurate and updated information is in the directory.

Treasurer Report: Royceanna Kendall reported gross revenues of approximately \$80,000 for the Plant Sale/TWSS. In 2025 gross revenues were \$75,000. The net revenue will be calculated as invoices are paid. The reimbursement process was discussed. Unit procedures will be followed to ensure accountability. The bank balance as of 3/31/2026 is \$95,547.80. The past year's bank balance was \$96,507.35 as of 3/31/2025. Our giving in 2026 increased significantly yet our balance is comparable to last year's.

### Standing Committee Reports

**Rosemary/Archives:** Susan Bame encouraged members to give her photos of activities to go into archives. All archives are organized and labeled.

**Education:** Pat Cox detailed the upcoming field trip to Henry Flowers' house and the Sensory Garden.

**Scholarship:** Phoebe Lake has received one scholarship application.

**Pharmacy Garden:** Julia Johnson updated progress on the greenhouse. The contractor has completed their portion. Propane, plumbing, fans, and thermostats are the next stage. The garden beds need mulch and the pathways need rocks.

**Sensory Garden:** Diana read Serena Speaker's report on the garden. New and potential members have volunteered as they work towards membership requirements. The help has been appreciated. The color wheel has been replanted. A marker for the tree donated has been installed. The continuing difficulty getting volunteers for the garden and school garden days was discussed. A motion was passed with one abstention to discontinue Pioneer Unit involvement with the Sensory Garden by June 30, 2026.

**Communications Publicity/Website:** Ann Lugg continues to work with a graphic artist to submit professional and eye-catching advertisements to area newspapers.

**Plant Sale:** Julia Johnson recapped the Plant Sale including the addition of security on Thursday and Friday nights, additional plant tables and wagons, and the effectiveness of the new clips securing the plant signs. Phoebe read evaluations and recommendations made anonymously by patrons and PU members.

**Thyme Well Spent Shoppe:** Leslie Conrads determined revenues were higher in 2026 but expenses have not yet been subtracted. Signage on Jaster was discussed.

### Unfinished Business

A credit card has been issued for PU business.

Officer elections for 2026 will be held in June. The treasurer position will be voted upon.

A motion to accept as written the document Festival Hill Memorandum of Understanding for the Forum was unanimously approved.

The document Festival Hill-Pioneer Unit Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed.

### New Business

A motion was unanimously passed for herbal scholars for EdCon to receive an additional \$250 each so all recipients of EdCon stipends receive \$500.

A motion was unanimously approved to purchase QuickBooks Simple Start program.

A motion was passed with 2 abstentions to reinstate July meetings starting July 2027 pending PU member approval.

The meeting was adjourned.

Joanna Hagler, Secretary

## HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

### Lemon Verbena, Lemon Balm, and Lemon Mist Thyme

Karen Springer, Ginger Heath, and Patty Mills presented the cultivation basics for these three lemony herbs. Lemon Verbena is probably the most lemony of the three. Lemon Balm is most lemony when used fresh while Lemon Mist Thyme is awfully cute and lemony. Of course, these presenters provided lots of details on the growth habits of these three herbs. Lemon Verbena will grow into a good size small tree or shrub. Lemon Mist Thyme will stay very close to the ground. Lemon Balm with its large leaves will form a nice small mound.

During the round robin, most growers reported that their lemony herbs enjoyed the rain. Not surprisingly, a few of the lemon savory plants are struggling and Mrs. Burns Lemon Basil would like more sunny days.

Madeline Johnson

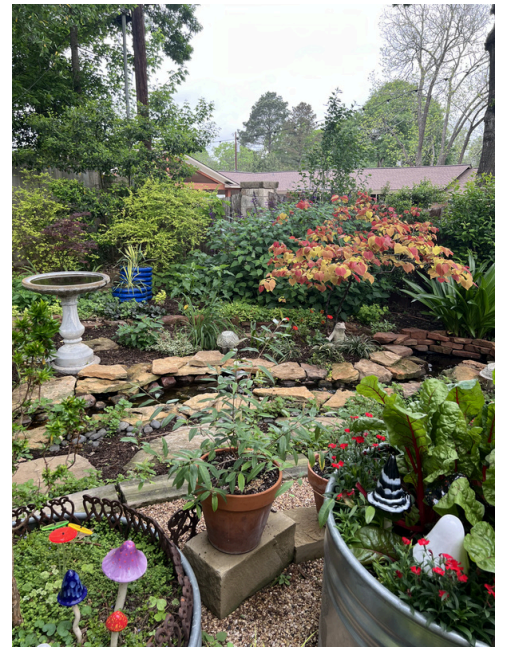
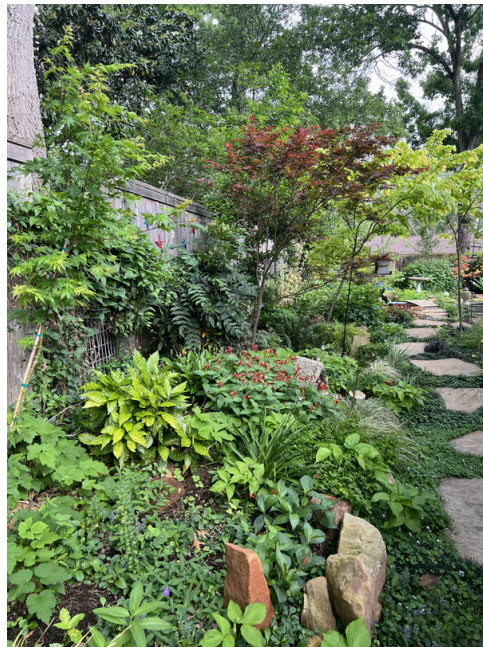


## SPRING FIELD TRIP

For our spring field trip we toured Henry Flowers' amazing place and then finished with the sensory garden at Brenham Elementary. Henry's front, back and side yards are filled with beautiful plants, shrubs, small trees, a stream, paths, tubs, huge rocks, and lots of colorful yard art. Henry was of course an expert tour guide and we learned how he planned and built the gardens from the ground up after moving in. This tour was a special treat. Then Serena Speaker took a few of us (several had to leave to go to EdCon) on a tour of the sensory garden which was looking pretty and spring-like, and we ended by eating Mexican food at Mariachis.

A big thank you to Henry and Serena for leading the tours.

Pat Cox, Education Chair



## SENSORY GARDEN

Kathy Carter will be filling in for me for the May workday at the Sensory Garden on May 21 from 9-11:00 a.m. while my right total knee replacement continues to heal. Please come and help her to remove weeds from all that wonderful rain and to spread the remaining mulch in the gardens.

A huge thanks to Kathy for her help and support while I am out.

Blessings  
Serena Speaker, Sensory Garden Chair

## FESTIVAL HILL

The Pharmacy Garden at Festival Hill is looking great this spring: come out for a visit if you haven't been in a while! I will be contacting the next round of professionals to get Phase II of the greenhouse restoration going.

Did you know that we have members who sponsor certain beds of the Pharmacy Garden? They become the primary caretakers of their region and help with the planning, research, and maintenance of their bed. We have a few beds without sponsors, and if you're new to the group it's a great way you can be involved in the Pharmacy Garden! Talk to me at our next meeting if you are interested!

Also, we began researching the many medicinal herbs of the Pharmacy Garden last year. The website is available under our Gardens tab of the Pioneer Unit website; find it here: <https://www.herbsocietypioneer.org/pharmacy-garden/> . At our upcoming Unit meeting, I will have information if you would like to help research a plant or two for the website.

Remember to join us on our First Friday workdays at Festival Hill: 9-11:00 a.m. (May 8 this month because of a rainy first Friday.) Park behind the Menke House. We make sure that the gardens are thriving and tidy up any gardens in need. It really helps me be able to maintain the herbal gardens that Madalene Hill, and so many others, helped plan and grow. They are becoming so much more manageable, and it's thanks to so many of you who have volunteered your time and talents in the gardens at Festival Hill! We end our work sessions with a little snack and time spent together.

And to celebrate May 4th: "May-the-Fourth be with you!" Here is a fun graphic that I created for my Festival Hill gardens social media accounts:

- Instagram : #roundtopfestivalhillgardens
- Facebook : Round Top Festival Hill - Gardens and Grounds

Julia Johnson  
Pharmacy Garden Chair



# ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Do you know a deserving student?

Each year the Pioneer Unit awards academic scholarships to deserving high school seniors or college students studying Plant Sciences or Horticulture or Environmental Sciences with a focus on Botany or Food Science or a closely related academic discipline. See the application form below or find it on the Pioneer Unit website ([herbsocietypioneer.org](http://herbsocietypioneer.org)).

For more information, contact [PVLake@gmail.com](mailto:PVLake@gmail.com).

Phoebe Lake  
Scholarships Chair

Herb Society of America, Pioneer Unit  
Madalene Hill Scholarship  
Academic Scholarship Award  
\$1000 - \$4000

For High School Seniors or College Students studying Plant Sciences or Horticulture or Environmental Sciences with a focus on Botany or Food Sciences or a closely related discipline.

## APPLICATION FORM

Please note that ALL sections must be completed and supporting materials enclosed for your application to be considered.

**1. Personal Information**

Your name: (last) \_\_\_\_\_ (first) \_\_\_\_\_ (middle) \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Academic Information:** list school or university now attending and any previous attended

Name of High School or University    Location    Dates Attended

\_\_\_\_\_

If attending university, what is your major: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Academic Performance:**

Grade Point Average \_\_\_\_\_ (Enclose an official transcript from school)

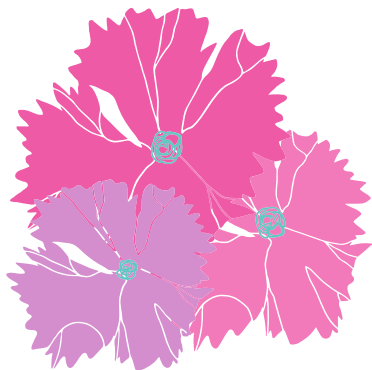
**4. Recommendations:**

Have one of your professors or guidance counselors write a letter of recommendation supporting your application and enclose with the application (must be on school stationary in a sealed envelope for confidentiality to be valid).

**5. Careers and Interest Summary from Applicant:**

Write two or three paragraphs summarizing your short-term and long-term career goals. Include any examples of special interests or projects in plants, herbs, gardening, etc.

Deadline for Submission: May 15, 2026  
Mail to: Pioneer Unit of the Herb Society of America  
P.O. Box 23    Round Top, TX 78954  
Attn: Phoebe Lake



## 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) wrote: "In response to my 'twin' Courtney: I'm racing 'round that sun right behind ya girl! But with just 44 laps myself, I feel I'll never quite catch up! ;) For my group of herbies: thank you for being the most amazing and caring group of herb lovers I could ever find! I'm also glad my birthday wish brought so many of you much needed rain! You're welcome! (And thank the Lord!!)"

Julia / Julie / Jules (because one name isn't enough!)"

**Shawn Helm** (May 2) sent three photos and the following: May quotes that sum it up!

- "May: the month where I plan to bloom, but mostly just wilt."  
"April showers bring May flowers" (and allergy season)."



**Louise Rice** (May 27) wrote: "It has been another year of great memories with my family, friends, and several memorable trips! I have a birthday trip in the near future, too, with my sister. I will be celebrating three-quarters of a century. And, after over 20 years of membership in the Pioneer Unit, I am still learning and enjoying our monthly herb meetings and all the wonderful members I have come to know."

*In Remembrance*

Caroll Edwards

Caroll unexpectedly passed away on April 8, 2026. It was such a shock to us. Many felt a profound sadness at hearing the news. Caroll's family shared the following memories about her:

She was born on September 8, 1949, in San Jose, California, and grew up in Akron, Ohio, and Pecos, Texas. She graduated from Pecos High School and attended Odessa College. Caroll and her husband built their company, Coastal Office Products, in Victoria, Texas. In between high school, college, and establishing their business, Caroll found herself living in a variety of places – Bandera, Honolulu, San Jose, and Brenham. Busy girl!

Along with Connie Gwyn, Caroll served as the Pioneer Unit Hospitality Co-Chair for the past two years. What a great team! Caroll also invited Unit members into her home on several occasions for craft workshops. She taught us how to make decorative garden stakes and beautiful windchimes to sell in the Potting Shed during the Plant Sale.

It was clear that Caroll loved flowers and hummingbirds when you visited her: hummingbird feeders hung everywhere outside her windows. We learned of another interesting passion of Caroll's – artichokes. Several of us attended the Brenham Gardening Club Flower Show in March. Caroll's display featured artichokes in a beautiful arrangement. Her family said Caroll was an artichoke geek.

Caroll's family said it best – “Caroll will be deeply missed and forever remembered for her gentle spirit, her strength, and the love she gave so freely.” So true.

Linda Hartson

Linda passed away on April 27, 2026, after a long battle with cancer. She was a longtime member of the Pioneer Unit, having joined in 2002. Is anyone surprised to find out that Linda was born and raised in New Orleans? Linda was born in New Orleans on September 22, 1944. She went to Sophie Newcomb College. After graduation, Linda was a psychotherapist and social worker. After marrying, she moved with her husband to Baton Rouge, then to Houston. She had two sons. In the 1980s Linda moved to Ammannsville, Texas, and according to Tess, Linda gave tours for the Schulenburg Chamber of the Painted Churches. Her family took her back home to Louisiana to be buried in the family cemetery.

Several members sent interesting anecdotes about Linda after hearing that she had passed:

Belinda Weatherly: Linda was a delightful member of our Culinary Group. We very much enjoyed her many stories of growing up with a large family of Louisiana cooks. (We also learned something about hoop skirts!) She always brought delicious and authentic dishes to our meetings. I was introduced to aspic by Linda. Delicious! She continued to attend our meetings up until the last couple of months when it just got too hard for her. We will miss her but I'm sure we will all remember her voice!! “Laissez les bons temps rouler.”

Patty Mills: I loved listening to her talk! Her accent was musical - and one never had to wonder what she thought about things!!

Tess Hartman: I loved the New Orleans accent. And I loved how she breezed in and said “I am here” loudly to the group. She was an entertaining person!

Leah Pearce: I always enjoyed her Chantilly Cake~darlings. She made me smile every time we met.

Pat Cox: Linda was also an artist and for several years painted wineglasses with bluebonnets and other flowers to sell in TWSS.

I don't believe I ever ate one of her Chantilly Cake~darlings, but they sound delicious. Maybe one of you has her recipe and can make them for us. Pat Cox's memory reminded me of the bird houses Linda painted one year for the Time Well Spent Shoppe. They were incredible. If anyone purchased one of her wineglasses, please take a photo and send it to me.

Diana Sellers

## Artichoke Nibbles

2 - 6 ounce jars marinated artichoke hearts  
 1 small onion, finely chopped  
 1 garlic clove, minced (I use 2)  
 4 eggs, beaten  
 1/4 cup fine breadcrumbs (I use Progresso herbed)  
 1/4 teaspoon salt  
 1/8 teaspoon pepper (I don't measure!)  
 1/8 teaspoon oregano  
 1/8 teaspoon hot pepper seasoning (Tobasco)  
 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese  
 2 tablespoons minced parsley

Preheat oven to 325. Drain marinade from 1 jar artichoke hearts into medium skillet. Drain second jar and discard marinade (or reserve for use in salads). Chop artichokes and set aside.

Heat drained oil; add onion and garlic and saute until onion is limp, about 5 minutes. Combine eggs, breadcrumbs, salt, pepper, oregano, and Tobasco.

Fold in cheese and parsley Add artichokes and sauteed onion mixture, blending well.

Pour into 9-inch square glass baking dish. Bake about 30 minutes. Allow to cool briefly before cutting into 1-inch squares. (Can also be served cold)  
 May be prepared a day or two ahead and reheated 10 to 12 minutes.

This recipe doubles easily; allow about an extra 10 minutes to cook. Use a cake tester and make sure it comes out dry in the middle.

ENJOY!

[Editor's Note: Carol's granddaughter Rachel Millikin was kind enough to send the above recipe, a favorite of Carol's that was served at her memorial service. The parenthetical notes are Carol's.]



Some of the Pioneer Unit members who attended Carol's memorial



Carol taking time to smell the roses



## PIONEER PATHS

Volume 33

Editor: Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.  
Pioneer Paths is a publication of  
The Herb Society of America,  
Pioneer Unit.

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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Chair – Diana Sellers      Vice Chair Programs – Tory Farley      Vice Chair Membership – Cammie Beierle  
Secretary – Joanna Hagler      Treasurer – Royceanna Kendall

## ED CON MEMORIES

Diana asked attendees of EdCon to write a paragraph or two about the conference. Here is one from Dawn Wilson:

Attending the 2026 HSA Educational Conference was like gathering around a campfire with well-read, well-traveled story tellers. Like-minded people, both familiars and strangers, sat at round tables, dining, chatting, and learning about using herbs from the experts. Not only did I learn new techniques for cooking and landscaping with herbs, I enjoyed becoming better acquainted with members of our unit and meeting other interesting people from other units.

One memorable moment arrived when Chef Sergio Remolina, assistant professor at The Culinary Institute of America, instructed us to use all the cilantro stems along with the leaves. "That's where all the flavor is," he says. I have been discarding the thickets stems my entire salsa-making life. Now I know better.



Table at EdCon from Cammie Beierle