



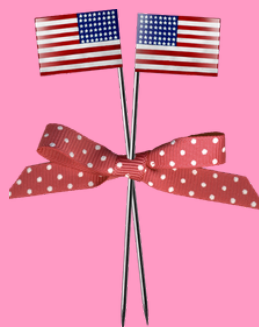
PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

July 2026

Volume 33, Number 11

July 4
America's Birthday



July 29
Thunder ull Moon

31 members have signed up to attend the bee house construction event. If you want to attend, but haven't signed up, please text Irene Spurrier at 979 732-4407 to find out if there have been any cancellations. For all members who have signed up, please alert Irene if you won't be able to make it. (There can be no refunds because the materials have been prepared in advance.)

JULY GATHERING

Date: July 9, 2026

Time: 12:00 noon Dutch Treat Lunch
2:00 p.m. Bee House Construction

Locations: Orsak's Cafe
121 West Fayette Street, Fayetteville

ARTS Annex
105 East Main Street, Fayetteville

Directions: From Round Top drive southwest on SH 237. Turn left onto FM 1291 to Fayetteville.

From Brenham, in order to avoid construction on TX 159, drive southwest on FM 389 until it T's into FM 954. Turn left onto FM 954 and drive until it T's into TX 159 (this is west of the construction). Turn right onto TX 159 to Fayetteville.

Please note: there is construction and possible road closure on TX 159 from Industry to the Fayette County line.

Program: Bee House Construction

Speaker: Tom Shaughnessy

Planners: Irene Spurrier, Diana Sellers, and Tory Farley

All bee house builders are asked to bring a Phillips-head Screwdriver, manual or electric.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Fourth of July will be celebrated in four days from the writing of this article. I'm looking forward to spending the day with lots of friends and family, eating some BBQ and desserts. My house is decorated with all things July 4th. Lucky for me, the parade goes by right in front of my house, so all I have to do is sit back and watch the craziness.

New Members -- Welcome to all of our new members who have joined the Pioneer Unit this past year!! We are so happy that you have joined us. We have lots of fun and learn new and interesting things about herbs.

Native Bee House Building -- We will start the new Fiscal Year off on July 9th, with Tom Shaughnessy teaching 31 of us how to build bee houses for our native bees. This is a special workshop event for us. For those attending this workshop, Tom requests that each of us bring a Philips-head screwdriver. We'll be installing twelve 1 ½-inch screws. An electric screwdriver would be ideal, but a manual one works fine too.

July and August -- The Pioneer Unit won't have a regular Unit meeting in July, just the special workshop event. We don't meet in August. Enjoy the summer and stay as cool as possible. See you in September.

2026-2028 Pioneer Unit Board -- New Board members were presented and elected by the members during the June meeting. Shortly after that meeting, the Board approved the Standing Committee Chairs who will serve during the 2026-2028 term. Congratulations to all the Board members and Standing Committee Chairs!! I believe it will be a great year ahead of us.

Board Officers

Chair – Diana Sellers
Programs – Tory Farley and Phoebe Lake
Membership – Cammie Beierle
Treasurer – Royceanna Kendall and Debi Thomas
Secretary – Joanna Hagler
Past Chair – Tess Hartman

Standing Committee Chairs

Archives/Rosemary – Susan Bame
Workshops – Pat Cox
Field Trips – Irene Spurrier
Scholarships – Martha Neva
Festival Hill Gardens – Julia Johnson
Publicity/Website – Ann Lugg
Newsletter/Listserv – Linda Rowlett
Hospitality – Connie Gwyn and Cathy Nitsch
Plant Sale – Julia Johnson and Madeline Johnson
Thyme Well Spent Shoppe – Shawn Helm
Forum – Diana Sellers

Have a great Summer,

Diana Sellers
Chair, Pioneer Unit

SENSORY GARDEN

We had our last meeting at the Sensory Garden on June 18 with seven women helping with the project, and we made the garden look good. The Brenham Elementary School is aware of this being our last visit and they are now responsible for the maintenance.

I want to thank all my wonderful volunteers who have helped with the garden maintenance and working with the third graders for their activities. A special thanks to Deb Meschwitz for planning and leading our group with the children's activities.

Blessing,
Serena Speaker
Sensory Garden Chair



MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT June 11, 2026

The June meeting of the Pioneer Unit was held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Round Top, Texas. Diana Sellers, Unit Chair, opened the Business Meeting.

Cammie Beierle, Membership Chair, welcomed 47 members and 9 guests. She praised the group for being so welcoming which has resulted in 10 new members. Our current membership is 90 members and 29 affiliate members. Cammie asked members to record their hours in Track It Forward.

Bev Elam will hold a whipped tallow workshop at her house August 13th at 9:30.

Irene Spurrier has organized our July gathering on July 9th at the ARTS Annex in Fayetteville. We will be making bee houses. Attendees will meet at Orsak's at noon for lunch prior to the 2:00 workshop. Please bring a Phillips screwdriver.

Cathy and Bill Archer have donated \$100 to the Pioneer Unit in honor of Ed Carey.

Diana invited members to attend the virtual Annual Business Meeting of the Herb Society of America on June 23rd at 6:00 p.m.

Serena Speaker, Sensory Garden Chair, invited members to volunteer in the garden on June 18th from 9:00-11:00. The goal is to leave the garden in good condition for the next stewards.

Belinda Weatherly invited members to a tea party for our September meeting. The Culinary Group will be providing lunch, so members need not bring anything for lunch.

Julia Johnson and Tess Hartman will present their learning from HSA EdCon at our December 2026 meeting.

Phoebe Lake, Scholarship Chair, sent applications to 30 high schools and colleges in the area. She received 13 applications from students. The committee awarded eight (8) \$1,000 scholarships to enthusiastic recipients.

Connie Gwyn thanked hostesses Patty Mills, Noreen Barker, Pat Cox, and Becky Nichols. Cathy Nitsch will co-chair with Connie as Hostess Chair.

Susan Bame, Archives Chair, has worked with her committee to complete the archives organization.

Julia Johnson, Pharmacy Garden Chair, worked with volunteers to spread 24 yards of decomposed granite in the garden. A drainage issue has been repaired, and the garden was cleaned up by Friday Volunteers. The greenhouse is set to get plumbing installed and a storage solution for tools.

Diana reported our Plant Sale gross income of \$73,000 with a net income of \$28,000. Forum had 86 attendees with workshops being offered again.

Debi Meschwitz was recognized for her dedication to teaching students in the Sensory Garden.

Madeline Johnson and Phoebe Lake were recognized for leading the Horticulture Study group for seven years.

The next EdCon will be in Orlando, Florida, in 2028.

(continued on the next page)

Tory Farley welcomed our speaker, Cindy Meredith, owner of The Herb Cottage in Hallettsville, Texas. Her topic was "The Pleasures and Benefits of Herbal Tea -- And How to Grow Your own Tea Garden." Cindy explained that using herbs in teas is the easiest way to get benefits from herbs. We can enjoy the ritual of brewing and experiment with different herbs. Some of Cindy's favorite culinary herbs are mint, lemon balm, hibiscus, chamomile, passionflower, calendula, basil, oregano, rosemary, thyme, and sage. Throughout her presentation, Cindy highlighted each herb's potential benefits and how best to cultivate it.

Diana opened the Annual Meeting by recognizing Board officers and chairs. As Chair of the Nominating Committee, Tess Hartmann presented a slate of proposed officers for the next two years. She asked for nominations from the floor, and there were none. The members then voted unanimously to elect the following:

Elected Officers:

- Chair: Diana Sellers
- Program Co-Chairs: Tory Farley and Phoebe Lake
- Treasurer Co-Chairs: Royceanna Kendall and Debi Thomas
- Membership: Cammie Beierle
- Secretary: Joanna Hagler

Finally, Royceanna Kendall, Treasurer, reported the following:

- Checking account balance: \$86,871.99 on June 1, 2026.
- Checking account balance: \$85,457.80 as of May 29, 2025.
- Certificates of Deposit balance: \$25,582.22
- Certificates of Deposit balance: \$17,480.63

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Hagler, Secretary

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Happy Summer, Herbies!!

It's starting out as a great new year here at the Pioneer Unit: we begin with 3 new members:

- Keelia Ritch, 6011 Andreas Road, Round Top, Texas 78954, keeliar@festivalhill.org (713) 446-1150, born on 02/08.
- Margie O'Brien, 1110 F.M. 1291, Fayetteville, Texas 78940, momcob123@gmail.com (417) 293-1569, born 10/30.
- Galin Morgan, 966 F.M. 1948N, Burton, Texas 77835, galinlewis@aol.com (713) 515-5091, born 03/14.

56 attended our June meeting: 47 members and 9 guests: Keelia Ritch came with Noreen Barker and Pat Cox; Jeff Lindemann came with Linda Rowlett; Jill Bachman and Margie O'Brien both came with Noreen Barker; Paritosho and Galin Morgan both came with Swee Leng Rapatz; Pamela Austin (her 3rd meeting) and Karen Smith both came with Connie Gwyn; and Sherrie Tolbert (glad to have Sherrie back!).

On Member Renewal: June is the end of our 2025-2026 Fiscal Year, and there were 94 members for that year. 86 members have renewed; four did not renew, and I'm waiting on two. We lost four dear members this year: Carol Edwards, Linda Hartson, Bob Sowers, and Tony Scanapico.

I hope you enjoy a peaceful summer, and we look forward to being together again in September!!
Cammie Beierle, Membership Chair

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Crafting with Lemon Herbs

The smell of lemon was everywhere! Crafting with lemony herbs is a wonderful way to give your home that fresh lemon scent. The Horticulture Study Group (HSG) met at Martha Neva's home on June 25 to learn about using lemony herbs in crafts and in the household. Leslie Conrad, Martha Neva, and Barbara White made several products for HSG members to take home. See the photo below. They also shared additional instructions for other uses. Martha demonstrated that a simmering pot of lemon slices, sprigs of lemon herbs, a little vanilla and water can replace the need for synthetic sprays or plug-ins. Leslie made soap that combined lemongrass and lavender essential oil. Barbara explained the process of making lemon-scented candles that can be paired with other herbal essential oils, such as rosemary.

As we filled our plates with lemony herb treats, we stopped in amazement at the butter candle burning inside the loaf of sour dough bread. Martha made an herbal butter containing lemony herbs. The softened herbal butter was packed into a small cup that had a wick in the center. After refrigerating the butter so that it hardened again, it was removed from the cup and placed in the center of the bread loaf. The candle was lit, providing softened herbal butter for spreading or dipping bread slices. It looks very cool and definitely a party trick that you should try.

Madeline Johnson



IN REMEMBRANCE – TONY SCANAPICO

Anthony “Tony” James Scanapico, born February 3, 1941, on Long Island, New York, passed away peacefully on June 19, 2026, in Houston, Texas. He is survived by his beloved wife of 46 years, Ethel Kay Scanapico; his daughters, Valorie and Deborah Scanapico, Cindy Diggs, and Janet Smith and her husband, John Robert Wright; his son, Jonathan Scanapico; his granddaughters, Amelia Kosma and her husband, Corey Smith, Lauren Greil and her husband, John, Hilary Donadio and her husband, Dan, and Reed Wright; his grandsons, Joey Thomson and his wife, Chelsea, and David Thomson and his wife, Abeer; and his great-grandchildren, Andromeda, Mia, Amos, Farah, Lucy, David, and Rafa.

A Certified Texas Master Gardener since 1994, Tony devoted himself to the beautification of his home and community. After retiring, he and his wife Kay moved to Round Top, Texas, in 1997, where he became deeply involved in local life, volunteering with the International Festival Institute at Round Top and participating as a member of the Herb Society of America. In 2023, Tony and Kay made their home in Schulenburg, Texas, to enjoy a quieter retirement.

Tony will be remembered by family and friends for his love of gardening and his warm, genial spirit.

Fayette Memorial Chapel



Visitation

Saturday, July 11, 2026

10:00 – 11:00 AM

Fayette Memorial Chapel

967 E Colorado St

La Grange, TX 78945

Memorial Service

Saturday, July 11, 2026

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Fayette Memorial Chapel

967 E Colorado St

La Grange, TX 78945

NEWS FROM THE GARDENS AT FESTIVAL HILL

A BIG thank you for our members who volunteered with me on Friday June 26, and Monday June 29. Friday Galin Morgan, Shawn Helm, and Noreen Barker helped with cleaning up the Mediterranean Garden. Those black-eyed susans were needing to go; we trimmed up the yucca and lavenders and even spotted tiny bluebonnets up already! Pamela Austin and Galin (and local volunteer Cooper) then helped with some thoughts about placing our NEW Festival Hill campus sign that will be delivered this week! (I'll let you all know when the installation and unveiling will be.) Then Pamela and I got the flowers ready for the weekend's concerts. On Monday, Jill Wilson and I worked on clearing out some dewberry brambles, pea vines, and pepper vines that are trying to ensnare the flowers of the Step Garden (just behind the Menke back parking area); there was a lot of poison ivy near the large rose bush, so we stayed away from that area.



Upcoming Garden days:

Monday July 6, 8-10 a.m.: I will be cleaning up the South Wall Garden (across from Mediterranean). Come join me if you'd like!

July's First Friday date was changed to July 10th: come anytime from 8-11 a.m. if you want to help out!

Monday July 13, 8-10 a.m.: Clean up around Ann's Arbor: join me if you'd like!

Help needed:

I will be gone the week of July 20-24. If anyone would like to help with watering the gardens at Festival Hill, please let me know.

We could use help watering on Monday and Friday. You can come morning or evening. I have Wendy Matthews watering on Wednesday, Sharon Fothergill volunteered for an evening watering, and Keelia Ritch will be helping out during the week.

Hope you all are staying cool and hydrated!

Julia Johnson

Pharmacy Garden Chair



JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 7	Elizabeth Price
July 23	Robin Greer
July 24	Jill Wilson
Jul6 26	Wanda Hubbard
July 29	Royceanna Kendall

MADALENE HILL SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

Once again, we have given out academic scholarships, this time to eight deserving college students. Each student was awarded \$1,000 to continue their studies in horticulture or a closely related discipline. Their majors ranged from floriculture to environmental science to postgraduate research in agriculture.

Each student had a high GPA and exemplified exactly the sort of young person we want to encourage in their academic endeavors.

This thank you from one recipient:

"I will use these funds to support my research activities and advance my work in medicinal plant science. This scholarship motivates me to continue striving for excellence in my research and academic career.

"Please extend my heartfelt appreciation to everyone involved in making this scholarship possible. I am truly grateful for your encouragement and investment in the success of aspiring students."

Phoebe Lake





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.”

Chair – Diana Sellers Vice Chair Programs – Tory Farley and Phoebe Lake

Vice Chair Membership – Cammie Beierle

Secretary – Joanna Hagler Treasurer – Royceanna Kendall and Debi Thomas

BOOK REVIEW

Soil and Spirit by Scott Chaskey

Soil and Spirit is a book I was fortunate to read as a member of one of the book clubs sponsored by the Herb Society of America. Scott Chaskey is a poet as well as a gardener (farmer), and his poetic language is part of what I loved about the book. He even included several of his own poems as well as numerous quotations from other writers and poets.

The book is a collection of Chaskey's essays over a range of gardening, farming, and environmental management topics. His subtitle – “Cultivation and Kinship in the Web of Life” – provides more than a clue to his underlying thesis: that we are all connected and that nature is best served by attention to all aspects of life and to the diversity of species. In a number of the essays, Chaskey's focus is on seeds. He harvests amaranth seeds with indigenous women and belongs to groups concerned with the preservation of seeds. He plants redwood saplings on Long Island, New York. Chaskey has an international reputation as a leader in the movement for implementation of Community Supported Agriculture.

If you enjoyed Robin Kimmerer's Braiding Sweetgrass, then you will likely appreciate Soil and Spirit.

And if you like reading about gardening topics, you might want to join one of the HSA book clubs! You can find information about the book clubs on the HSA website herbsociety.org by logging in on the member portal, clicking on the dropdown menu, and then clicking on Special Interest Groups.

Linda L. Rowlett, Ph.D.