



PIONEER PATHS

Newsletter of the Herb Society of America
Pioneer Unit

June 2026

Volume 33, Number 10

June 14
Flag Day



June 21
Fathers' Day

June 21
Summer Solstice



June 29
Strawberry Full Moon



MONTHLY UNIT MEETING

Date: June 11, 2026

Time: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet
10:00 a.m. Presentation and Meeting
Annual Meeting of the Members

Location: Bethlehem Lutheran Church
412 South White Street
Round Top, Texas

Directions: From US 290, take Texas 237 south for 7.6 miles. Turn right onto Bauer Rummel (Round Top Road) and then left onto South White Street. The church and Fellowship Hall are at the end of the street on the right.

Program: Herbs in Early Texas Homestead Gardens

Speaker: Cindy Meredith

Angel: Serena Speaker

Hosts: Connie Gwyn, Noreen Barker, Pat Cox, Patty Mills, and
Becky Nichols

Lunch: Summer Salads



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

May Fun - Our May meeting was exceptional – the weather was perfect, our catered picnic lunch was delicious, and Cristen Andrews presented such an informative program on “Growing Central Texas Herbs.” I am so envious of her garden. Many thanks to Chef Nicole for serving a wonderful array of salads and relishes. Connie Gwyn led us in a fun plant exchange. Everyone who attended the May meeting left with a new beautiful plant (or plants).

The June meeting will be our last official meeting of the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year. Our meeting will be held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Round Top. Cindy Meredith will present “Herbs in Early Texas Homestead Gardens.” It’s an interesting topic to learn how those first Texans used the native herbs growing right outside their log cabin doors.

Membership Dues - In addition to attending the presentation, remember that your 2026-2027 membership dues need to be submitted. Please bring a check or cash to pay your dues. If you bring cash, I recommend that you bring the exact amount. Change is difficult to come by. If you can’t attend the meeting, please mail your dues to P. O. Box 23, Round Top, Texas 78954. All dues must be paid by June 30th. Cammie Beierle starts working on the report to HSA National to reactivate members the first of July. Thanks very much to everyone who has already submitted their dues. Cammie was very busy collecting dues during the May meeting.

Hostess Sign-up for the coming year – Also thanks to those of you who signed up on the Hostess Volunteer sheets for next year. There are still many opportunities available. Being a hostess is a fun way to obtain hours toward your 20-hour volunteer goal for the year. Hostesses are critical to the success of our meetings each month. I always look forward to seeing what clever decorating ideas each group comes up with. Connie will have the sign-up sheets out again at the June meeting, so please bring your calendars.

Board Officer Elections – The slate of Pioneer Unit Board officers for the 2026-2028 Fiscal Years will be presented. Active members will vote to select the officers of the Board. The first Board meeting of the new Fiscal Year will be held July 7th.

The Past Two Years - The current Board Officers and Committee Chairs have done amazing work over the past two years. So much has been accomplished. Their commitment and dedication to make the Unit run smoothly and be successful is truly inspiring.

The monthly programs have been informative and entertaining; many new faces have joined us; the Scholarship Committee found many deserving students to receive scholarships funds from us; and we learned some new crafts and made creative items to sell at the Thyme Well Spent Shop. I think we all agree that the Plant Sale was hugely productive over the past two years, and we had a couple of well-attended Forums and revived the Friday workshops. Have you visited the Pharmacy Garden lately? Julie and the First Friday gang are an awesome group, making a huge difference in the Pharmacy Garden. And there are so many more positive accomplishments that happened over the past couple of years. I think the Pioneer Unit members are such an industrious and fun group.

Thank you to all the Pioneer Unit members for participating in the Unit activities. Many of you brought lots of guests who became members. All the volunteer time you contribute makes an enormous difference to the ability of our Unit to function and provide great programs to the community. I also wish to thank you for your support of me.

Remembering – Sadly we lost three of our members the past year - Bob Sowers, Carol Edwards, and Linda Hartson. Fortunately, we have memories of their time with us – good times!

Here’s to the next Fiscal Year (starts July 1st). I have a feeling it’s going to be another busy and successful year.

Diana Sellers
Chair, Pioneer Unit

FROM YOUR PROGRAMS CHAIR

As part of the continuing effort to ensure that members get to experience the presentations from our annual Forum, Cindy Meredith will address our Unit at the June meeting at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Rount Top on the topic she presented at Forum: "Herbs In Early Texas Homestead Gardens." This should be an interesting presentation!

You can learn more about Cindy at her website: theherbcottage.com where you can also sign up to receive her newsletter and/or purchase her digital book (as shown on the first page of this newsletter).

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

WOW! Has it ever been a great year!! Everyone worked so hard and it has paid off with all the wonderful profits for scholarships and provisions for the Pioneer Unit! Please, remember to record your volunteer Hours on Track It Forward! If you need help, let me know!!

It was wonderful to see everyone at the May meeting! We had a total of 46 members in attendance and four guests: Margie O'Brien came with Noreen Barker; Keelia Ritch and Galin Morgan came with Belinda Weatherly; and Kira Longmire. Please, introduce yourself to them!

As I write the Membership report for the June Board meeting, it's exciting to see:

To date the Pioneer Unit has a total of 90 members. Of those, 28 are Affiliates; eight of the Affiliates are Members At Large (MAL), and there are five whose primary unit is not the Pioneer Unit.

We added 12 new members. Three of those are Affiliates who belong to other units. The new members are Karen Bookout, Kathy Carter, Sylvia Forbes (Affiliate-MAL), Sharon Fothergill, Robin Greer, Joy Kamani, Beth Murphy (Affiliate-South Texas Unit), Elizabeth Price (Affiliate-MAL), Joy Quimby, Swee Leng Rapatz, Jeanne Schilling, and Barbara White.

Sadly, we lost three much loved and missed members: Linda Hartson, Carol Edwards, and Bob Sowers passed this year.

56 members have renewed their membership, thus far; I will check the mail the rest of this week. Thank you all for your great help making this year's renewal work quickly and easily!! Look for the new directories in September! If you haven't had your picture taken for the Directory, let me know at the June meeting and we will get that done!!

We will not officially meet in July or August this year. Have a wonderful and safe summer!!

Cammie Beierle
Membership Chair

WORKSHOPS

Check your emails this summer for news about upcoming workshops, some to make items for Thyme Well Spent Shoppe at Forum 2027, and some just to learn new skills. If you have suggestions or would like to teach a workshop and share your skills, please contact Pat at the email below. New workshop ideas are always welcome.

Pat Cox
Education Chair
bmerlynne@cvctx.com

MINUTES OF UNIT MEETING HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA PIONEER UNIT May 14, 2026

The May meeting of the Pioneer Unit was held at the Edythe Bates Chapel at Festival Hill, Round Top, Texas.

Tory Farley, Programs Chair, welcomed back our speaker, Cristen Andrews, owner of Small-Town Farm. Cristen's presentation was Herb Gardening in Central Texas. She believes our reason for growing herbs is for food, medicine, nature, beauty, and magic. Cristen inspired us with pictures of her farm where they "garden with life in mind." Everything plays a role in her ecosystem from the insects to birds to armadillos. Instead of weeding and removing her trimmings, she keeps them for organic matter to enrich her soil. Cristen believes we don't need a manicured garden to grow medicine. Instead, we can appreciate a plant's full lifecycle and grow with diversity in mind with the goal of a polyculture rather than a monoculture. A variety of central Texas "plant allies" were recommended for their ease of growing and many uses.

Diana Sellers, Unit Chair, opened the meeting. Cammie Beierle, Membership Chair, welcomed four guests. Royceanna Kendall, Treasurer, reported a bank balance of \$89,842.51 as of April 30, 2026. Diana reminded PU members that the June newsletter will have a list of potential board officers to be voted upon.

Phoebe Lake, Scholarship Chair, has extended the high school/college scholarship application deadline to May 15th. At the next board meeting, discretionary giving will be decided upon. Please contact Phoebe with any recommendations for deserving recipients.

Julia Johnson, Pharmacy Garden Chair, invited volunteers to First Friday at the Pharmacy Garden. She described the plant bed adoption process and asked for members to adopt available beds. Volunteers are also needed to research plants in the Pharmacy Garden. The information will be on the website and accessible via a QR code in the accompanying garden bed. Contact Julia for a list of plants to research and guidance about what to include. This is a great way to earn PU hours when it is hot outside. Julia updated PU members on progress towards the greenhouse.

Diana welcomed Betty Pior back after a prolonged illness. Betty thanked everyone for their support during her healing. Serena Speaker is doing well following her surgery.

HSA EdCon was well attended. Diana and 15 PU members enjoyed their learning while they were there. Julia Johnson and Tess Hartman will share their experience at an upcoming meeting. The PU provided a basket for the EdCon auction and gave notebooks as part of the swag bag.

Diana opened discussion about reinstating the PU July meeting. Irene Spurrier explained how field trips were difficult in the hot summer months. A motion was made by Linda Rowlett to add the July meeting as an official meeting to the 2027 calendar year. Ann Lugg seconded the motion. Diana called for a member vote. The motion passed.

The decision to stop managing the Sensory Garden was discussed. The PU has struggled for years to have enough volunteers. Joy Kamani volunteered to contact a local Ag teacher for potential interest in the garden. Other PU members suggested other organizations who may be interested in the garden. Diana asked them to contact the organizations or contact Serena Speaker or Diana with the organization's name and contact information.

Connie Gwyn asked for a volunteer to co-chair the hospitality chair position with her.

Ann Lugg updated the photo directory.

Members enjoyed a lunch generously prepared by Nicole Petrie, the chef at Festival Hill. Hostesses Madeline Johnson, Leslie Conrads, Belinda Weatherly, Ann Lugg, and Linda Rowlett were thanked for their organization of our meal.

The meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Hagler, Secretary



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS

The By-Laws of the Pioneer Unit specify that the Unit shall conduct an Annual Meeting between April 1 and July 1 each year. We have traditionally held our Annual Meeting at the regular June meeting. Twenty percent of the Active Members constitute a quorum for voting at any meeting (See By-Laws, Article VII. C and D.). Having a quorum present is especially important for the Annual Meeting in even years, because that is the time when we elect a new slate of Officers of the Board (By-Laws, Article V).

As the designated Past Chair, Tess Hartman has served as the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Tess has provided the following slate of Officers of the Board for your consideration for the two-year period beginning July 1, 2026:

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

Nominations may also be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting. As set forth in Article V of the By-Laws, the Officers to serve will be elected by majority vote of Active Members present at the Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting agenda:

- * Chair Address
- * Annual Reports
- * General Business
- * Election of Officers of the Board including presentation of the slate of Officers from the Nominations Committee, nominations from the floor (if any), and voting

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP

Robers' Lemon Rose, Mrs. Burns Basil, and Lemon Savory

Oh my...we have completed the cultivation and botany of the lemony herbs chosen for this study. The last set of three, a pelargonium, a basil, and a savory, was covered by Jules Johnson, Serena Speaker, and Vicki Wiste

Jules explained that Robers' Lemon Rose Pelargonium is unique among the scented pelargoniums because of its high concentration of citronellol. Unlike its probable parent, the Rose Pelargonium, its ratio of citronellol (lemon) to geraniol (rose) is 100:1. Take it for a ride in a closed car and you will be amazed at the strength of the lemon scent. Chopped leaves added to a pound cake make for a wonderful lemon dessert.

Moving on to Mrs. Burns Lemon Basil, Serena explained that this cultivar of sweet basil was discovered in a private garden in Carlsbad, New Mexico, in the 1920s. Janet Burns received seeds from the owner of the garden which she handed down to her son, Barney. Barney took the time to register this lemony basil, and it now appears in gardens everywhere. Mrs. Burns Lemon Basil is preferred over the generic Lemon Basil for its higher lemon flavor when a strong aromatic punch is needed.

Lemon Savory is the smallest of this trio of herbs. Vicki provided the group with some savory meatballs (and the recipe) to enjoy. Lemon Savory prefers dry, sandy soil that drains well. It benefits from regular but light harvesting, so cook Mediterranean dishes often.

Madeline Johnson



HSG May Photos from left to right: Robers' Lemon Rose Pelargonium, Mrs. Burns Lemon Basil, and Lemon Savory

JULY PIONEER UNIT GATHERING

We hope you're looking forward to gathering in Fayetteville on Thursday, July 9th, at ARTS Annex to make your own native bee house! As was outlined in Diana's May 31 email to all Unit members, "Tom Shaughnessy will teach us how to make native bee houses/hotels. You might recall that Tom gave a wonderful presentation to us in December about native bees, and he showed us the native houses he had built. Everyone seemed very interested in learning how to make their own bee houses."

Here's the line up:

12:15 p.m. Fayetteville lunch plans are in progress. Stay tuned.

1:50 p.m. Short walk to ARTS.

2-4:00 p.m. Native bee house building at ARTS (Arts for Rural Texas) Annex, 114 N. Live Oak Street, Fayetteville.

All materials for making your bee house will be provided at a cost of \$15 per bee house. In order to have the correct amount of materials, please let either Diana or Irene know by June 12th and pay by cash or check at the June 11 Unit meeting, or mail checks made out to Pioneer Unit Herb Society of America to Irene Spurrier, 1716 Wilde Road New Ulm, Texas 78950.

We (collaborative planning by Diana Sellers, Tory Farley, and Irene) hope everyone takes part in this unique, fun activity!

Tom Shaughnessy of Cedar Hollar Services, LLC sent the following information about the bee houses that will be constructed: "Here is a basic photo of what the finished product will look like. Each attendee will have a "kit" with all the pre-cut pieces, hardware, and nesting tubes along with an info sheet on the native bees in general and best practices for putting the finished nest boxes out in their pollinator habitat."



FESTIVAL HILL

Hey there Herbies,

I was so nervous about having 24 yards of decomposed granite delivered for the Pharmacy Garden pathways - that was two FULL dump trucks! But it all worked out beautifully! Courtney and her boys, my older two kids, and Cooper, who volunteers with us at Festival Hill often, came out along with the maintenance staff at Festival Hill. We had two tractors, a power bucket, and just enough hands, rakes, and wheelbarrows to get just about everything spread in around 2 hours. Whew!!

We were also able to work on a drainage issue at the back of the Pharmacy garden. It looks so nice that I'm dreaming about getting more granite delivered near the greenhouse.... But one thing at a time! Here are some photos for your enjoyment!



And I am loving my lavender bed from our horticulture study group last year. I have added a row of stones in the front, and keep planting purple flowers around my lavenders! I lost my two container-grown lavenders during the freeze, but my in-ground lavenders have really thrived, and they make me smile!

(continued on next page – including garden picture)



Also, take time this summer to browse our Pharmacy Garden plants online! Just go to our Pioneer Unit website, click the first tab "Gardens" and scroll to "Festival Hill Gardens" and "Explore the Pharmacy Garden." Or use this direct link : <https://www.herbsocietypioneer.org/pharmacy-garden/> I have time this summer to get back to this project. If you would like to help by researching an herb or two, just send me an email!

QUICK FACTS
ABOUT
**GREATER
GALANGAL**

-  Ginger scent and flavor
-  Milder taste and used more for cooking than Lesser Galangal
-  Essence d'Amali is an essential oil made from the rhizome and used in perfumery



Julia Johnson
Pharmacy Garden Chair

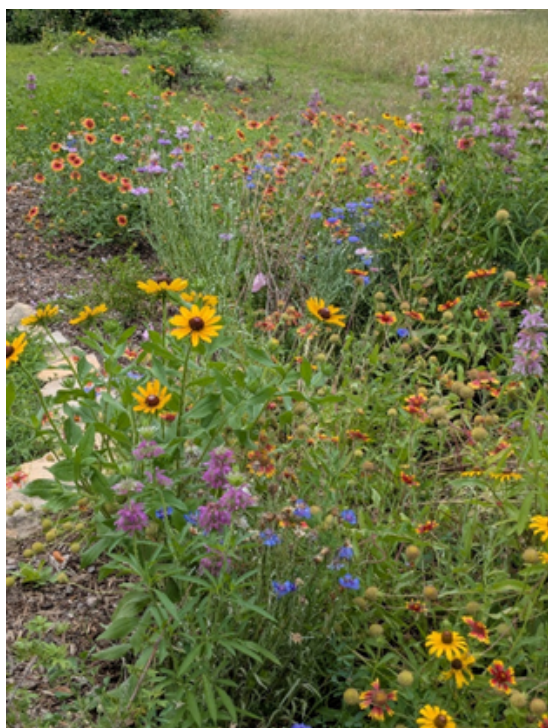


JUNE BIRTHDAYS

June 5 Tess Hartman
 June 9 Martha Neva and Dawn Wilson
 June 13 Leah Pearce
 June 16 Leslie Conrads
 June 19 Diana Sellers

Leah Pearce (June 13) sent the adjacent photo and waxed poetic: "My sister gave me this small bouquet, and it's brought such delight to my days. Thinking of all the plant sales!"

"I am honored to have this life with all who have crossed my path. I wish you love to your heart, smiles to your doorsteps, health to your body, and peace and happiness to your home throughout the seasons. Appreciate each of you!"



Diana Sellers (June 19) sent the lovely photo of her garden and wrote: "It's darn hard (painful actually) to become another year older, but I'm sure glad I'm here to celebrate that accomplishment. Making new garden beds that contain native plants is my passion right now. I've spent the past year focused on finding and growing native plants. Finding is the difficult part. There aren't many sources. I've learned a lot and managed to plant 10 new native trees and create a beautiful wildflower garden. I'm so proud to be learning how to help the pollinators and decrease my impact on the environment. And it's exciting to still be learning."

"I also continue to learn so much about herbs from everyone in the Pioneer Unit. You all are an amazing resource of information. Are you familiar with the Rod Stewart song "Oooh La La"? It contained a verse that I often think is how I feel – "I wish that I knew what I know now when I was younger." If I only knew so much more 20 or 30 years ago. Wow! That would be amazing."



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	Vice Chair Membership – Cammie Beierle
Secretary – Joanna Hagler	Treasurer – Royceanna Kendall	

SENSORY GARDEN

We have been quiet as we did not have a workday in May due to my second Right TKA, but I am ready for the June workday. No one was available to fill in for me in May so it was a cancel and it rained that day anyway!!!

We will be giving the SG back to the Brenham Elementary School on June 30. I had a wonderful meeting with the BES Principal Steven Seimglusz on May 29. He has been pleased with how the garden has looked all these years and will make every attempt to keep it going with help from the other schools including the high school agriculture department. I did encourage this class to remember our scholarship program. He was very thoughtful and understood how difficult it is to get volunteers to work in the garden. If anyone knows of a group that might be interested in helping with this garden, please let me know and I will pass that information along to Mr. Seimglusz.

We will have one more workday on June 18 to try to catch up with the weeding and complete spreading the pile of mulch. I will need as many hands as possible to help with this final workday!

Blessings
Serena Speaker
Sensory Garden Chair