

NOTES FROM RIVER FARM

THE ARRIVAL of this issue of *The American Gardener* in your mailbox means that the official beginning of spring is close at hand—a welcome milestone as it signals the start of the gardening season in much of the country. This year, in particular, it takes on special significance. Here at River Farm, the task of getting our gardens back in order after what has proven to be the snowiest winter on record for the mid-Atlantic region will surely keep us busy for months to come.

While we are saddened by the broken limbs, uprooted trees, and damaged shrubs that the storms passing through our area left in their wake, it means that the canvas of our garden now has some openings where we can put our horticultural prowess to the test. We find ourselves rethinking the garden as once-shady locations become sunny, and as plants that had become old friends and had long been taken for granted are suddenly no longer part of the landscape.

Whether it's renewing a storm-damaged garden or just getting a start on spring, gardeners across the country will soon be making their way to local garden centers for plants, supplies, advice...and maybe a sympathetic ear! A trip to the local garden center or nursery is a sure cure for cabin fever and a great way to get reenergized and gather ideas for the new gardening season.

The AHS has a long-standing relationship with the horticulture industry—particularly with retail garden centers. We are unique in that our membership includes both professional horticulturists and their customers—the common bond being a passion for plants and gardens. The AHS serves as an information bridge between the industry and American gardeners, while garden centers across America are where our members look to find the things they need to turn their ideas into reality.

At a recent industry gathering in Louisville, Kentucky, we had the opportunity to meet with a number of leaders of the garden center industry. One of these was Ernest Wertheim, a well-respected horticulturist, landscape architect, and garden center consultant from California. Ernest has been practicing since 1940, and his firm is internationally known for its work in garden center and retail nursery design. He is a longtime AHS member (22 years) and an avid reader of *The American Gardener*. We salute Ernest for his dedication to helping the industry connect with American gardeners and wish him belated congratulations on his 90th birthday!

Speaking of people who have influenced American horticulture, we are pleased in this issue to announce the winners of our annual AHS Great American Gardeners and Book Awards. Please turn to page 14 to read about these remarkable people, organizations, and publications.

Happy spring and please enjoy this issue of *The American Gardener*!

Susie Usrey, Chair, AHS Board of Directors
Tom Underwood, Executive Director



CONTACTS FOR AHS PROGRAMS, MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS & DEPARTMENTS

For general information about your membership, call (800) 777-7931. Send change of address notifications to our membership department at 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. If your magazine is lost or damaged in the mail, call the number above for a replacement. Requests for membership information and change of address notification can also be e-mailed to membership@ahs.org.

THE AMERICAN GARDENER To submit a letter to the editor of *The American Gardener*, write to The American Gardener, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308, or send an e-mail to editor@ahs.org.

DEVELOPMENT To make a gift to the American Horticultural Society, or for information about a donation you have already made, call (800) 777-7931 ext. 118.

E-NEWSLETTER To sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, visit www.ahs.org.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM The AHS offers internships in communications, horticulture, and youth programs. For information, send an e-mail to education@ahs.org. Information and application forms can also be found in the River Farm area of www.ahs.org.

NATIONAL CHILDREN & YOUTH GARDEN SYMPOSIUM For information about the Society's annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, call (800) 777-7931 ext. 137 or visit the Youth Gardening section of www.ahs.org.

RECIPROCAL ADMISSIONS PROGRAM The AHS Reciprocal Admissions Program offers members free admission and other discounts to more than 250 botanical gardens and other horticultural destinations throughout North America. A list of participating gardens can be found in the Membership area of www.ahs.org. For more information, call (800) 777-7931 ext. 132.

RIVER FARM The AHS headquarters at River Farm is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays year-round (except Federal holidays), and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays from April through October. Admission is free. For information about events, rentals, and directions, visit the River Farm section of www.ahs.org.

TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAM Visit spectacular private and public gardens around the world through the Society's acclaimed Travel Study Program. For information about upcoming trips, call (703) 650-5262, send an e-mail to ahs@mcnairtravel.com, or visit the Travel Study section of www.ahs.org.

WEBSITE: www.ahs.org The AHS website is a valuable source of information about the Society's programs and activities, finding out about gardening events in your area, and linking to other useful websites. To access the members-only section of the website, this year's password is **oak**. The username is always **ahs**.