

*Making America a Nation of Gardeners, a Land of Gardens*

# American Horticultural Society Annual Report

July 1, 2005–June 30, 2006

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

### *Making a Difference at Home, in Our Communities, and Across the Nation*

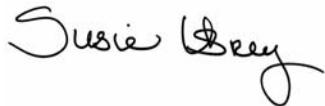
**F**ISCAL YEAR 2006 (July 2005–June 2006) was a year of exciting new activities and organizational growth at the American Horticultural Society (AHS) as we worked hard to expand our reach, strengthen our programs and services, and build a solid foundation for the future.

Since its inception in 1922, the AHS has been dedicated to making a difference in people's lives through the art and science of horticulture. In today's technology-rich and rapidly changing world, that mission is more relevant than ever. Plants and gardens not only offer a vital connection to the earth, they have such a positive impact on the quality of our lives and the environments we live in. And, for so many of us, gardening provides a lifetime of enjoyment, relaxation, and wonder-filled discoveries.

For these reasons and more, I find it so gratifying to be involved in an organization that is about creating, encouraging, and recognizing successful gardeners. Fostering opportunities for young people to get involved with plants and gardens, opening the eyes of more Americans to the many benefits of gardening, making gardening exciting and fun—it's all important work that makes a difference in our world in so many ways.

Of course, we cannot do it alone. We are so appreciative of the contributions, involvement, and dedication of our members, donors, volunteers, and partner organizations. Thanks to your support, our AHS national community of gardeners continues to grow and strengthen.

As you read through this *Annual Report* for the 2006 fiscal year, I hope you will be proud and inspired by our AHS and the work we are doing with and for you, our members. We look forward to continuing this journey with you!



Susie Usrey  
Chair, AHS Board of Directors

# Making America a Nation of Gardeners, a Land of Gardens



## *Helping Americans enjoy the rewards of gardens and gardening*

For more than 80 years, the American Horticultural Society has helped home gardeners and professional horticulturists increase their knowledge, feed their passion for gardening, and embrace responsible stewardship of the earth. AHS membership provides access to the Society's rich horticultural resources, including a host of opportunities for hands-in-the-soil gardeners, armchair dreamers, and hearty travelers alike to fully experience the joys of gardens and gardening.

From the wealth of informative stories in *The American Gardener* magazine to the network of gardens and arboreta offering free admission through the Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program (RAP), the opportunity to participate in the Society's annual Seed Exchange Program, and access to the members-only section of the AHS website, members have a wealth of resources at their fingertips.

AHS members also benefit from discounts on AHS educational programs and at flower and garden shows across the nation. Through all of these resources, AHS members discover the many facets of American horticulture, while gaining inspiration and new knowledge.

The Society's award-winning magazine, *The American Gardener* delivers an abundance of articles and columns that speak to gardening across America's diverse climatic regions.

Feature articles this past year included a detailed

explanation of organic weeding techniques by Kris Wetherbee, an inspiring profile of Nebraska nurseryman and AHS award winner Harlan Hamernik, and an instructive article on creating meadow gardens by Carole Ottesen. Regular columns such as the new "Green Garage®" series, written by Contributing Editor Rita Pelczar, provides earth-friendly gardening tips. And "Gardening by Design," an innovative series of articles by Tres Fromme offers a unique perspective on the philosophy and practice of garden design.

The 2006 *AHS Member Guide* highlighted the Reciprocal Admissions Program, which encourages members to visit gardens while traveling by offering special admission privileges and discounts. For any member interested in exploring the diversity of American horticulture, the nearly 200 participating gardens and arboreta in 44 states, plus Canada and the U.S. Virgin Islands are a good place to start. The *Member Guide* also detailed the extensive 2005 Seed Exchange offerings representing 130 different kinds of seeds donated by 93 members and 10 organizations across the country.

In addition to the Society's prestigious magazine, popular resource books, and informative educational programs, the AHS website offers a valuable resource for members and others interested in expanding their knowledge and understanding of gardening and horticulture.

## *Connecting to tomorrow's gardeners*

Since the first National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in 1993, the American Horticultural Society has been a leader in promoting and supporting the inclusion of gardens in children's lives. Not only are plants and gardens important to play, learning, and quality of life, but research shows that outdoor experiences early in life help shape positive environmental attitudes and values that last a lifetime. The AHS strives to provide educators, garden designers, community leaders, and other children's gardening advocates with the practical skills and inspiration they need to foster the next generation of gardeners and horticulture leaders.

The 13th annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium hosted by the Atlanta Botanical Garden and Wonderland Gardens in Atlanta, Georgia, gathered 202 attendees from 31 states and one foreign country to share inspiring stories and successful models for children and youth gardening programs across the nation.

The three-day symposium featured keynote speakers Marcia Eames-Sheavly, Tim O'Keefe, and Sharon Lovejoy, who challenged attendees to discover how gardening can provide what children and youth really need, how educators can foster authentic inquiry learning, and how to introduce children to science and nature through gardening.

The "Growing Good Kids—Excellence in Children's Literature Awards," presented in partnership with the Junior Master Gardener program, made their debut in Atlanta during the symposium. The awards celebrate children's books that teach meaningful lessons about gardening and earth stewardship. In the inaugural year, 40 books were honored in a one-time "Classics" category. Young people from Atlanta area Junior Master Gardener programs unveiled the award winners by reading excerpts from all 40 books.



During the past year, the AHS has also partnered with Hollin Meadows, an elementary school near the Society's headquarters to establish *The Growing Connection™* project at the school. AHS Horticulturist Peggy Bowers also designed a meadow and other gardens on the school grounds. Through a partnership between the AHS and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The Growing Connection* engages young people in the science of growing nutritious food and offers the opportunity for experiential learning while sharing culture with peers around the world. *The Growing Connection* Demonstration Garden at River Farm, along with the school gardens at Hollin Meadows, have attracted interested groups from across the country for tours.



Students at Hollin Meadows learned how to grow vegetables as part of *The Growing Connection* program

## *Sharing the art and science of horticulture*

Through its educational programs, the American Horticultural Society provides a variety of opportunities for members to explore the world of gardening and to pursue their passion for plants. Ranging from national symposia to intimate garden tours, the Society's educational programs offer one-of-a-kind experiences that appeal to a diverse audience of gardeners, horticulturists, and educators.

A new AHS Garden School "Gardening with Native Plants," was presented to a sold out audience of native plant enthusiasts at River Farm in April. Sixty-three attendees from 10 states gathered to hear from a remarkable lineup of native plant experts that included garden writer Carole Ottesen, plantsman and nursery owner Kurt Bluemel, landscape architect Darrel Morrison, horticulturist and author Richard Bir, Rick Lewandowski of the Mt. Cuba Center, and AHS Horticulturist Peggy Bowers.

The AHS Garden Schools also went on the road for the first time, with "The Art & Science of Color in the Garden" traveling to Franklin Park Conservatory in Columbus, Ohio, in the spring. Forty-one attendees from 12 states learned about the intricacies of color in the garden. Presenters included Heather Will-Browne of Walt Disney World Resorts, Jim Nau of Ball Horticultural Company, Michael DeHart of the J. Paul Getty Trust,

The 2005 National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in Atlanta included a tour of Wonderland Gardens

landscape designer and author Julie Moir Messervy, landscape architect Karen Aitken, and Tres Fromme of Longwood Gardens.

In addition to the AHS Garden Schools, the AHS took the Green Garage® on the road as an exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show. The Green Garage program is aimed at helping American gardeners recognize and seize opportunities to make environmentally conscious decisions by showcasing the tools, equipment, supplies, and techniques that support sustainable gardening. The Green Garage exhibit was well received in Philadelphia, winning the Best in Show Award for educational exhibits by non-academic organizations, as well as the Special Achievement Award from the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania.

One of the Society's most important educational programs, the AHS internship program, offers hands-on, practical experience for college students and career changers. In 2005–2006, 10 interns spent a summer or a semester working with AHS horticulture, education, and publication staff members to expand their experiences and further explore their career options. In addition to participating in field trips, writing articles, and doing a variety of intern projects, three of the interns traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, to assist with the National Children & Youth Garden Symposium.



For the discerning gardener who wishes to explore the roots of American horticulture and garden design, the Society's Travel Study Program, offered in partnership with the Leonard Haertter Travel Company, offers trips to an array of unique gardening locales. In 2005–2006, nine trips were offered, including the Summer Coastal Gardens of New Zealand, the Gardens of the Veneto, the Gardens of Chile, and Argentina and the Wilderness of Patagonia, and the Gardens and Monuments of Sicily.

The Society also supports educational opportunities by co-sponsoring many programs across the nation, including the Colonial Williamsburg Garden Symposium, the Magic of Landscapes Symposium, and the America in Bloom Symposium and Awards Program.

### *Providing useful and authoritative information*

With more than 100 books devoted to the world of ornamental plants, an award-winning magazine *The*

*American Gardener*, a groundbreaking horticultural map, and countless other publications, the AHS is a leading source of useful and authoritative gardening information.

In 2005 and 2006, *Gardens Across America: The American Horticultural Society's Guide to American Public Gardens and Arboreta* and *Gardens Across America: West of the Mississippi*, compiled by John J. Russell and Thomas S. Spencer, were released. This two-volume series is an excellent guide to nearly 1,400 public gardens and arboreta across the United States. The 2004 edition of *The American Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants* continues to serve as a popular reference for 15,000 species and cultivars, complete with AHS Heat Zones and USDA Hardiness Zones for all plants.

The members-only section of the AHS website offers a multitude of resources starting with access to back issues of *The American Gardener* along with supplementary information to many of the articles appearing in the magazine and special discounts on books and garden products. AHS members also have access to an interactive heat zone finder, based upon the AHS Plant Heat Zone Map, to assist them in selecting appropriate plants for their gardens.

### *Recognizing horticultural achievements*

Through its prestigious awards program, the American Horticultural Society celebrates outstanding achievements, encourages excellence, and inspires innovation in the art and science of horticulture.

In 2006, 12 Great American Gardeners Awards were presented at an awards ceremony held at River Farm. These awards recognized great accomplishments in a range of disciplines including: plant breeding, landscape design, teaching, communication, and floral design.

Among the 2006 winners is Liberty Hyde Bailey Award recipient Daniel Hinkley, a noted plant collector, writer, and co-founder of Heronswood Nursery. Robert Wing Langhans received the H. Marc Cathey Award for his contributions to enriching

An AHS intern assists in planting plugs in River Farm's André Bluemel Meadow

Paul Tukey, left, and Daniel Hinkley, right, were among the recipients of the AHS's 2006 Great American Gardeners Awards



horticulture through outstanding and notable research. Jim Swasey, professor emeritus at the University of Delaware and former coordinator of the Longwood Graduate Program at the University of Delaware, received the Teaching Award. Other distinguished recipients were: Edgar Aldridge, Kathleen Fisher, Sheldon Fleming, Hitomi Gilliam, Harlan F. Hamernik, Madalene Hill, Darrel Morrison, J. Dean Norton, and Paul J. Tukey.

During the same ceremony, five gardening books published in 2005 received the AHS Book Award. Recognized for overall quality and the contribution they make to American horticulture, the recipients of the 2006 awards are: *The Art of the Japanese Garden* by David and Michiko Young; *California Native Plants for the Garden* by Carol Bornstein, David Fross, and Bart O'Brien; *Growing Hardy Orchids* by John Tullock; *The Wild Braid* by Stanley Kunitz with Genine Lentine; and *Yard Full of Sun* by Scott Calhoun.

At flower and garden shows across the nation, 33 AHS Environmental Awards were presented in 2006. Recognizing green industry leaders whose flower show exhibits demonstrate sensitivity to environmentally responsible gardening, the AHS Environmental Award commends earth-friendly design and practices.

## Showcasing and demonstrating the best of American horticulture

Since 1973, River Farm has been the national headquarters of the American Horticultural Society. Renowned for its spectacular vistas of lawns and meadows stretching down to the Potomac River, the property features naturalistic and formal gardens that offer year-round delight to visitors of all ages. Once owned by George Washington, the property is now a showcase of horticultural innovation as well as history.

With the tremendous efforts of the Society's volunteers, Corporate Partners, and many other friends, River Farm continues to grow into a gathering place for American gardeners and a celebration of American horticulture. Several events took place at River Farm in 2005 with these goals in mind. The Friends of River Farm (FORF) Plant Sale in April was a gigantic success drawing 2,000 visitors in search of the perfect plants for their gardens over the course of the two-day sale. Later in the spring, 350 visitors attended the FORF Family Day Picnic, celebrating the coming of spring, while engaging children in nature-related activities.

In September, the AHS partnered with the Garden Centers of America, as one of six host sites for a new industry event to unveil new plants for the 2006 growing season, along with time tested garden favorites. Centerton Nursery, Cherry Lake Tree Farm, Goldsmith Seeds, Proven Winners, and Saunders Brothers Nursery drew green industry professionals from across the nation to River Farm for the debut of



what will be an annual event. The weeklong showcase ended in a celebratory atmosphere with the 2005 AHS Gala at River Farm.

The gardens and landscape of River Farm continue to blossom. With the help of AHS volunteers and Corporate Partner Kurt Bluemel, Inc., the third phase of the André Bluemel Meadow restoration project was completed in May 2006. More than 31,000 plugs of grasses and herbaceous perennials were planted, representing 30 different species.

The *Growing Connection* Demonstration Garden underwent a redesign, making the garden easier to navigate for visitors, and for the staff and volunteers who collect the abundant harvests, which were donated to a local food bank.

The Children's Garden also received noteworthy attention. With the help of local Girl Scouts Katie Staples and Milica Wren, the Children's Garden Bat Cave and Little House on the Praire Gardens were renovated and rejuvenated. River Farm's youngest visitors have been enjoying the enhancements.

Throughout the year, the future of River Farm as the National Center for American Horticulture started coming into focus. Initial efforts to take the River Farm Master Plan, adopted in 2004 by the AHS's Board of Directors, to the next step are underway.

Melody Gray, a Longwood Graduate Fellow and former AHS intern selected the Master Plan's central axis, the Liberty Hyde Bailey Walk, as the focus of her Master's degree thesis research. The scope of Melody's research centers on Liberty Hyde Bailey's contributions to American horticulture and initial concept designs for the Walk. In December 2005, the American Horticultural Society received a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust in support of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Walk, providing funds to take Melody Gray's work to the next level by commissioning schematic designs for the walk.

The André Bluemel Meadow at River Farm in full summer bloom

# American Horticultural Society

## Financial Summary

With assets of over \$4 million and debt-free ownership of its headquarters property, George Washington's River Farm, the American Horticultural Society (AHS) is in a strong financial position to fulfill its mission. A growing membership and generous donors make it possible for continued enhancement of programs, services, and outreach efforts.

### Statement of Financial Position

Year ended June 30, 2006

ASSETS	
CASH ACCOUNTS	\$112,134
PLEDGES RECEIVABLE, NET	407,222
OTHER ASSETS	58,069
PLEDGES RECEIVABLE, NON-CURRENT PORTION	2,791,424
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	840,612
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,209,461</b>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES	\$176,978
DEFERRED REVENUE AND SUPPORT	617,566
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$794,544</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
UNRESTRICTED	3,001,613
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	196,345
PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	216,959
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,414,917</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,209,461</b>

### Statement of Financial Activities

Year ended June 30, 2006

REVENUE SUMMARY	
MEMBERSHIP	\$801,190
EVENTS AND SERVICES	309,873
CONTRIBUTIONS AND GALA	729,255
RIVER FARM RENTALS	277,641
NET INVESTMENT INCOME	116,357
ROYALTY AND OTHER INCOME	62,479
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$2,296,595</b>
EXPENSES SUMMARY	
MEMBERSHIP	\$433,962
EDUCATIONAL EVENTS	335,266
COMMUNICATIONS	524,718
DEVELOPMENT	193,569
GARDENS AND BUILDINGS	364,077
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	409,161
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,260,753</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$35,842</b>

The above numbers have been excerpted from the American Horticultural Society's June 30, 2006 audited financial statements. A copy of the complete audit report is available upon request from the American Horticultural Society national office.

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