



# News

*AHS Programs and Events*

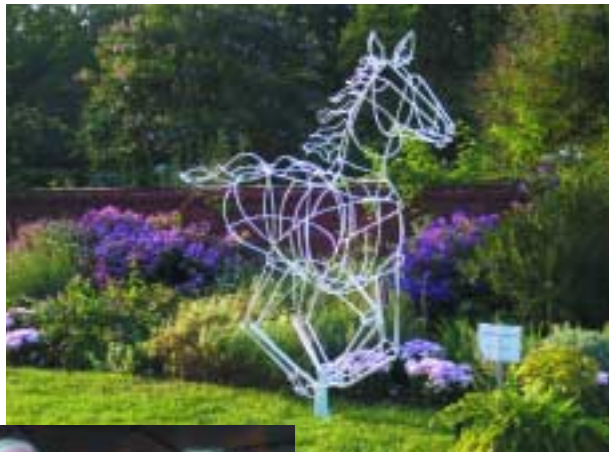
## Stars Shine on Fundraising Gala

NATURE, ART, AND horticultural science conspired to provide a breathtaking setting for the American Horticultural Society's 80th Anniversary Gala, "The Garden as Art," held at River Farm on September 28. On a pristine fall night, with the moon and stars reflecting on the Potomac River, nearly 400 guests strolled the gardens and enjoyed the art displays set up both on the grounds and inside the main house.

"We were blessed in so many ways," says AHS President **Katy Moss Warner**. "The evening could not have been any better and we were fortunate to have an incredible group of artists and guests here to celebrate our anniversary and support River Farm and the American Horticultural Society at this important fund-raising event."

Given the theme, it was not surprising that art was represented in a variety of guises. Not only was there art on display in the gardens, but the gardens reflected the art of horticulture, with empty picture frames placed strategically to focus attention on creative aspects of the landscape. Inside the house and on the dinner tables, art from the garden was represented in creative floral displays. Art was also prominently featured among the donated items offered during silent and live auctions. And the honorary chairman for the gala was **Earl A. "Rusty" Powell III**, director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Sculptures by internationally known artists **Tomas Fernandez** and **Dorothy Gillespie** adorned the grounds, along with a whimsical "pinaconda"—a snake-shaped sack filled with pine needle mulch—created by local environmental artist **Jeanne Drevas**. Inside the Society's headquarters, the botanical art of **Clarissa Bonde** was displayed in the ballroom and interpretive landscape paintings by members of the Washington Society of Landscape Painters graced other interior walls.



Above: A graceful horse sculpture by Tomas Fernandez gallops through one of the gardens at River Farm. Left: Gala Honorary Chair Earl A. "Rusty" Powell III and Gala Chair Leslie Ariail.

mitage, landscape designers **James van Sweden** and **Osamu Shimizu**, and artist **Dorothy Gillespie**—created additional drama during the bidding process for the live auction. The more than \$100,000 raised from the gala will support the American Horticultural Society's new vision and national programs.

"It was a magical night," says Gala Chair **Leslie Ariail**. "River Farm has never looked more beautiful."

## Roses—Focus of Intern Project

AHS HORTICULTURAL INTERN **Margot Herrman** had a chance to get up close and personal with pests and diseases this past summer during an evaluation of 14 different cultivars of David Austin English roses at River Farm. Margot applied the concepts of integrated pest management (IPM) while caring for the roses, focusing on monitoring and prevention of pests and diseases and using non-chemical techniques to treat any problems, including hand-picking insect pests or spraying them off with a jet of water, and removing leaves and stems afflicted with fungal diseases such as blackspot and powdery mildew.

David Austin Roses, Ltd., based in Wolverhampton, England, donated the roses for trial in the warm, humid, summer conditions typically experienced in Virginia. Margot kept detailed records for each cultivar, noting by date the onset of any disease or pest problems and what type of treatment she used. She also made observations about the overall appearance and performance of each rose and kept a log of daily temperatures and rainfall.

The roses generally performed well throughout the summer, but Margot did experience consistent problems with Japanese beetles. A few cultivars suffered damage from spider mites or thrips and others showed susceptibility to powdery mildew and blackspot. The best performers in the River Farm trials were the following: 'Anne Boleyn', 'Charlotte', 'Golden Celebration', 'Molineux', 'Noble Anthony', 'Sophy's Rose', 'Tess of the d'Urbervilles', and 'The Pilgrim'.

"Margot's project has shown that we can grow beautiful roses here while at the same time being good stewards of our environment," says **Tom Underwood**, AHS director and curator of gardens and buildings.

Before returning to Rice University in Houston, Texas—where she is a sophomore majoring in earth science and environmental engineering—Margot sent a copy of her evaluation of the roses to the researchers at David Austin so the company can use the information in assessing how well the roses might perform in different regions and climates.

For more information on David Austin roses, visit the company's Web site at [www.davidaustinroses.com](http://www.davidaustinroses.com).

## Garden Club Group Donations Benefit River Farm

VISITORS TO River Farm are the beneficiaries of two new picnic tables, two bicycle racks, a bench, and a tree, thanks to generous donations from the Alexandria Council of Garden Clubs. The group's president, **Babs McClendon**, was at River Farm recently for a dedication ceremony for the tree—a sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)—and the bench, which are located in the Garden Calm.

"The Alexandria Council of Garden Clubs wants to salute our partnership with

the American Horticultural Society at River Farm and honor those who have helped raise funds to fulfill our goals of historic preservation, horticulture education, and the preservation of our environment," says Babs. "We hope the sourwood tree and bench will enhance the peaceful and soothing atmosphere that characterizes Garden Calm."

The new picnic tables, made of durable and environmentally friendly recycled plastic, will replace existing wooden picnic tables that are showing signs of age. The tables will be placed in a shaded picnicking area overlooking the meadows sloping down to the Potomac River.

According to **Tom Underwood**, AHS director and curator of gardens and buildings, the bike racks will encourage visitors to take advantage of River Farm's proximity to a popular bike trail that runs along the George Washington Parkway between Alexandria and Mount Vernon. "The trail makes River Farm very accessible to cyclists and walkers," says Tom.



AHS Intern Margot Herrman removes Japanese beetles from a David Austin rose.



Babs McClendon and Tom Underwood watch as Marty Moore cuts the ribbon on a bench donated to River Farm.

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## Landscape Legend Bill Evans Dies

This past September, hundreds of people gathered to celebrate the life of **Morgan "Bill" Evans**, who died August 10 at the age of 92. Bill had for many years been the director of landscape design at Walt Disney Imagineering, where he worked closely with Walt Disney in developing the distinctive landscape design of Disneyland and all of Disney's subsequent theme parks. He retired from a full-time role in 1975, but continued to consult with Disney during a career that spanned over five decades.

Bill's seemingly limitless vision for distinct and creative designs not only revolutionized the theme park industry, it also had a major influence on American horticulture as a whole. He introduced many new subtropical plants, including coral or lucky bean tree (*Erythrina caffra*), a native of South Africa that later was adopted by the City of Los Angeles as its official tree.

"Bill Evans defined Disney theme park landscaping, and trained just about everyone who has created theme park stories in living environments," says **Mark Sklar**, principal creative executive and vice chairman for Walt Disney Imagineering. "He

taught generations of landscape architects how to do their jobs with passion, skill, and tender loving care."

In 1992, Bill was named a Disney Legend and in 1996 the Landscape Architecture Foundation honored him with an award of "Special Tribute." He also received Landscape Design Awards in 1973 and in 1993 from the American Horticultural Society.

Landscape architect **Becky Bishop**, who first met Bill in 1980 when she was an intern for Walt Disney Imagineering, says, "Everyone in the landscaping business thinks of Bill the same way that the world thinks of Walt....He taught us to sculpt, paint, and create movement with plants."

The memorial ceremony for Bill was held at Descanso Gardens, in La Cañada, California. The setting for the service—beneath an enormous oak tree—was appropriate for a man who was known for his love of trees. Guests shared stories about Bill—a fitting tribute to a great man, landscape architect, and horticulturist whose legacy lives on through the countless people he influenced. —*Eva Monheim, Editorial Intern*



In this portrait taken in 1970, Bill Evans models one of his many trademark hats.

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