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Notes from River Farm

AS THE harvest moon wanes and autumn delivers its first chill of the season, I write my first communication to you as president of the American Horticultural Society. For many years, Dr. H. Marc Cathey, president emeritus of the AHS, has written this column. During that time he has regaled us with joyful and poignant stories of his granddaughters and shared his great love for plants. There is hardly a finer plantsman, a more accomplished horticultural researcher, and—although I may be presumptuous to say so—a more imaginative grandfather.

Because I know you would miss his regular articles just as much as I would, we have created a new column called “Everyday Garden Science” in which Dr. Cathey will use his uncanny ability to make complex horticultural concepts easy to understand. See page 62 for the very first edition in his new series.

The last few months have been a very exciting and busy period for the American Horticultural Society. In September, we hosted a design charette at our River Farm headquarters in which 26 designers, horticulturists, educators, writers, and neighbors participated.

Tres Fromme, a landscape designer with Longwood Gardens, and Tom Underwood, our new director and curator of gardens and buildings, led this team through various brainstorming activities to determine what should be here at River Farm to both honor the site and make it important and relevant to our whole nation of gardeners. Among the exciting concepts that surfaced were: idea gardens, food gardens, kids gardens, gardens as stage sets for multimedia presentations, a bamboo forest, dramatic flower beds, woodlands, meadows, big trees, lawns, and broad views to the Potomac River.

We are dreaming big dreams. With your support, hopefully one day soon we will turn some of these great ideas into real gardens—and maybe even share all the creative gardening concepts contained within them through the various media now available to us.

Great enthusiasm is also building for membership in the Society. Many changes to *The American Gardener* ensure that we continue to offer inspiration for gardeners throughout America. We have lots of new seeds to offer this year through our seed exchange program, including some very special acorns of the Turkish oak (*Quercus serris*), donated by a great new friend in Newport, Rhode Island. You should try them!

I'd like to bring to your attention a special card in this magazine—located between pages 56 and 57—that makes it simple to give a holiday gift membership in the Society. Please help the AHS grow and give your favorite gardener a gift that can be enjoyed all year long. As we are celebrating our 80th anniversary this year, we will send a unique commemorative 80th Anniversary pin to each member who gives a gift membership this holiday season!

Happy gardening!



Dr. H. Marc Cathey and AHS President Katy Moss Warner enjoy one of River Farm's blooming fraxinosa trees.

Katy Moss Warner

—Katy Moss Warner, *AHS President*