



News

AHS Programs and Events

Sky is the Limit for New AHS Program

THROUGH A NEW educational program initiated by the American Horticultural Society, school children from around the world will soon be able to share with one another the results of their experiments growing food plants from seeds exposed to high altitudes in a science balloon.

AHS is partnering with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and an array of national and international organizations, to—quite literally—launch “The Growing Connection: Cultivating Food, Connecting Minds, and Harvesting Hope,” a creative new educational program for middle-school children in America and around the world.



Sunflower seeds will play a major part in the new AHS educational program.

NASA will launch a science balloon carrying a payload of sunflower seeds and seeds of other edible plants into the Earth’s upper stratosphere. The massive balloon—it will be the size of the Houston Astrodome when fully inflated—will float at an altitude of nearly 27 miles, exposing the seeds to cold temperatures, harsh solar radiation, and differential gravity.

Once the seeds return to earth, they will be sent to participating schools in America and around the world. Each school will also receive untreated “control” seeds and Earth Boxes. These self-contained growing units will be filled with a standardized soil medium that will ensure consistency for the experiment. The Earth Boxes will be planted with the seeds from the balloon and the control seeds. Participating schools will receive a specially developed curriculum that will explain the science behind what the children are doing with the seeds and support FAO’s global efforts to share information about growing food plants. Children will be encouraged to use information technology to share their findings with participating students worldwide.

“This launch will connect school children around the world,” says **Bob Patterson**, FAO’s senior liaison officer in Washington, D.C., “and bring their focus to the importance and rewards of growing food plants.”

Among the other partners for the project are the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA); Pennsylvania State University; the Rockland Teachers’ Center Institute, a non-profit teachers group; and Laminations, a private company that is supplying growing containers called Earth Boxes™. “The diverse resources and scientific credentials of the organizations that are partnering with AHS are what make this such an exciting program,” says **Mary Ann Patterson**, AHS director of national programs and public relations.

The program will be formally unveiled on March 29 during Washington Blooms!, the AHS spring festival. Then, in April,

Join Us for *Washington Blooms!*

There’s still time to make plans to join AHS for peak spring bloom in Washington, D.C., from March 29 through April 5. The week-long celebration, which coincides with the city’s National Cherry Blossom Festival, kicks off with an exciting weekend of activities at River Farm.

More than 20,000 bulbs will be in bloom at River Farm, some of them in a unique bulb maze in the children’s garden. There will be hands-on activities for children, a science balloon, and displays of botanical art.

During the week there will be daily tours as well as demonstrations by landscape architect **James van Sweden**, bulb specialists **Brent and Becky Heath**, Mississippi-based author **Felder Rushing**, and other experts.

For more information about Washington Blooms!, turn to pages 12 and 13, or visit the AHS Web site at www.ahs.org.



New AHS Mission Statement

AT A MEETING last September, the American Horticultural Society's Board of Directors approved a new mission statement that better reflects the widened scope of the Society's national programs and outreach. The Society's mission is "to open the eyes of all Americans to the vital connection between people and plants, to inspire all Americans to become responsible caretakers of the Earth, to celebrate America's diversity through the arts and sciences of horticulture, and to lead this effort by sharing the Society's unique national resources with all Americans."

According to AHS President **Katy Moss Warner**, approval of the new mission statement, "is the next step in the process our visioning committee outlined during a strategic planning session held last year." AHS Board Member **Susie Usrey**, who chairs the visioning committee, says the new mission statement "elucidates the important goals the committee established and ties in with our vision of making America a nation of gardeners, a land of gardens."

In line with the new vision and mission statement, AHS is already moving ahead with several projects, including the Growing Connection (described on page 7), an update of the USDA Plant-Hardiness Zone Map (see box, below), the upcoming launch of a SMARTGARDEN™ regional book series, alliances with groups such as America in Bloom that are promoting beautification programs (see article, opposite page), and establishing River Farm as a model for American horticulture.

Atlanta, Oklahoma City Sites for AHS Regional Meetings

THIS WINTER, AHS members are invited to participate in special regional meetings that are being held in conjunction with the Southeastern Flower Show in Atlanta and the Oklahoma Garden Festival in Oklahoma City. The AHS regional meetings will include early morning sneak previews of the flower shows, exclusive speakers, and an opportunity for question-and-answer sessions with AHS President **Katy Moss**



A hint of spring awaits at the Oklahoma Garden Festival. In addition to lavish displays like this one from last year's event, the show will feature a lecture by AHS President Katy Moss Warner.

Warner, who will be a featured speaker at both flower shows.

At the Oklahoma Garden Festival, the AHS meeting is scheduled for the first day of the show, which runs from January 30 to February 2. AHS members attending the regional meeting will enjoy early admission to the show, followed by breakfast and lectures by **Russell Studebaker**, garden columnist for *The Tulsa World*, and **Mark Miller**, AHS deputy director of national programs. Attendees will have a private question-and-answer session with Katy before hearing her lecture "Keep Them Growing—Making Children's Gardens Work" on the main show floor.

The AHS meeting at the Southeastern Flower Show will also be held on the opening day of the show, which runs from February 5 to 9. Attendees will get a guided preview tour of the show, including breakfast, then will join all flower show attendees in hearing Katy's presentation titled "SMARTGARDEN™: Inspiring a Nation of Gardeners." Afterwards, AHS meeting attendees will

Updated USDA Hardiness Map to Debut in March/April issue of *The American Gardener*

A printed copy of the revised and updated USDA Plant-Hardiness Zone Map will debut in a special pullout section of the March/April issue of *The American Gardener*. This printed version is the first to be available to gardeners, with an additional version expected later in the year. More information about public access to the map will be included in the next magazine issue.

The revised map—compiled by Meteorological Evaluation Service Company of Amityville, New York—was created using updated temperature information from thousands of weather stations throughout the United States. This edition features four new hardiness zones (12 to 15) that will make it easier for gardeners in subtropical regions such as southern California, the Gulf Coast of Texas, and southern Florida to select plants suited to their area and provide much-needed temperature information for indoor gardeners. It will also show state and county lines and county names to help gardeners identify their precise zone.

An article that accompanies the map in the March/April issue will define the zone changes reflected in the map and their relevance to the American gardener. The article will also detail how to use the new Plant-Hardiness Map in conjunction with the AHS Heat-Zone Map to establish the most meaningful guidelines for plant selection in each region.

In Memoriam: Ted Marston

Known from coast to coast for his knowledgeable garden writing, enthusiastic involvement in the world of horticulture, and engaging personality, **Theodore "Ted" Marston** died October 28 at his home in Kirkland, Washington. He was 70.

A graduate of Iowa State University with a degree in agricultural journalism, Ted founded and was publisher of *Plants Alive*, a critically acclaimed magazine focusing on house plants. Later he worked as a free-lance writer and authored several gardening books, including *Annals*. He was a past president of the Garden Writer's Association (GWA) and was named a GWA fellow in 1999.



Ted was an active participant in many regional and national horticultural organizations. In addition to his work with the GWA, he served on the American Horticultural Society's Board of Directors for five years and was one of three

founders of the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle, Washington.

"Ted had an incredibly inquisitive mind, a mind that was like flypaper—everything stuck to it," says long-time friend **Egon Molbak**, founder of Molbak's Nursery in Seattle. "I don't think he ever forgot anything." Ted's wife, **Dorothy**, says that her husband was an avid reader and traveler. "He was constantly reading about things—anything in the bookstore that caught his attention." As a host for many of the American Horticultural Society's Travel Study Program tours to gardens around the world, Ted was renowned for his knowledge of history, landscape design, and plants.

He was also known as an engaging conversationalist who loved to be around people. According to friend and fellow founder of the Northwest Flower and Garden Show, **Duane Kelly**, "Ted had an incredible way of connecting people—he knew and engaged people on all levels. Connecting people was his greatest gift."

—Eva Monheim, Editorial Intern

hear a private lecture with book signing by nationally recognized author **Carole Ottesen**, associate editor of *The American Gardener* and author of *The Herbal Epicure*. There will also be an opportunity for a private question-and-answer session with Katy and AHS Board member and nationally recognized perennial plant expert **Allan M. Armitage**, who is also a featured speaker at the show.

If you would like to attend one of the AHS regional meetings, pre-registration is required and is separate from registration for the flower shows. For additional information and registration forms for the AHS meetings, visit the AHS Web site at www.ahs.org or call Mark Miller at (800) 777-7931 ext. 117. Additional information about the two flower shows can be found through links under the National Events Calendar on the AHS Web site.

AHS in the News

THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL Society's leaders and programs have attracted prominent national media coverage over the last few months.

AHS President **Katy Moss Warner** was interviewed by *New York Times* garden columnist **Ann Raver** for an article, published in the November 7 issue of the *Times*, about the upcoming release of the revised USDA Plant-Hardiness Zone Map. The article discussed changes in weather and climate patterns throughout the United States and the effects these shifts are having on gardeners.

The publicity generated by Ann Raver's article attracted the interest of National Public Radio (NPR), which invited AHS President Emeritus **Dr. H. Marc Cathey** to be a guest on NPR's popular show "Science Friday," hosted by **Ira Flatow**. During the hour-long program, broadcast on November 15, Dr. Cathey discussed zone changes that will appear in the revised USDA hardiness map and explained how gardeners can use the hardiness map and the AHS Heat-Zone Map to select plants.

Another guest on the show was botany professor **David Francko** of the Miami University of Ohio, who is author of *Palms Won't Grow Here and Other Myths: Warm-climate Plants for Cooler Areas*, scheduled for release in February from Timber Press. Francko pointed out that many tropical and subtropical plants can be used in northern gardens once more accurate information about their hardiness and heat tolerance is available.

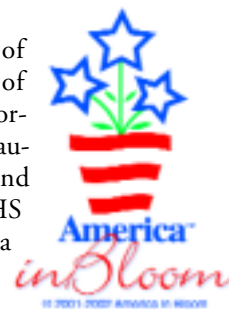
Katy was also interviewed for an article about plants blooming out of season that was published December 3 in the *Seattle Times*. The article mentioned the upcoming release of the revised hardiness map and described changes in growing conditions being experienced by gardeners around the country.

Kurt Bluemel, chair of the AHS Board of Directors, was profiled in major feature articles that ran in both the *New York Times* (October 17) and the *Baltimore Sun* (October 18). Each article emphasized Kurt's passion for ornamental grasses and described how he has championed the increased use of grasses and herbaceous perennials to create a more natural design style in American landscapes.

America In Bloom

PROMOTING THE beautification of America's cities and towns is the goal of America in Bloom (AIB), a non-profit organization that recently celebrated its inaugural year at an award ceremony and educational symposium this past fall. AHS President **Katy Moss Warner** served as a keynote speaker at the event, which was held in Reston, Virginia.

"Creating alliances with like-minded organizations is an important element of the American Horticultural Society's new mission," says Katy. "Like America in Bloom, we recognize the important role plants and green spaces play in the health and well-being of all people. We encourage communities to enhance their natural beauty by embracing public



Join AHS and Master Gardeners in Cincinnati

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the 2003 International Master Gardener Conference, to be held June 18 to 21 in the greater Cincinnati and northern Kentucky area. AHS is a sponsor of this conference and several of the scheduled speakers, including AHS President **Katy Moss Warner** and Board Chair **Kurt Bluemel**, have AHS ties. **Carole Ottesen**, associate editor of *The American Gardener*, and **Felder Rushing**, an AHS Board member, will be speaking and conducting book signings during the conference. For more information, link to the conference Web site through the AHS Web site, or call (859) 261-7454.

parks, restoring natural areas, creating children's gardens, and hanging flowering baskets from lamp posts."

The America In Bloom program is modeled after Canada's Community in Bloom program, which in turn was modeled after a program developed in Great Britain. According to AIB director and contest chair **Delilah Onofrey**, the inaugural year of the America In Bloom program was a resounding success, with 38 cities participating. Awards were presented in six categories based on population size. Winning communities were Camp Hill, Pennsylvania; Fairhope, Alabama; Westlake, Ohio; Fayetteville, Arkansas; Kalamazoo, Michigan; and Chicago, Illinois.

AIB symposium attendees toured the Society's headquarters at George Washington's River Farm and were given an overview of the AHS SMARTGARDEN™ program. Representatives of the award-winning communities were presented with complimentary AHS memberships.

If you're interested in getting your community involved with

the America In Bloom program, contact AIB Administrator **Laura Kunkle** at (614) 487-1117 or visit www.americainbloom.org.

Williamsburg Symposium

THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL Society, *Fine Gardening* magazine, and the Williamsburg Institute are co-hosting Colonial Williamsburg's 57th Garden Symposium, titled "Garden Earth: A Partnership," to be held April 6 to 8.

Based on the theme of environmentally friendly gardening, the symposium will cover topics ranging from "Unkillable Plants of the South" to "The Pleasures of a No-Lawn Landscape." Lecturers include keynote speaker AHS President **Katy Moss Warner**, writer and naturalist **Sharon Lovejoy**, botanist **Arthur O. Tucker** of Delaware State University, and garden writer **Felder Rushing**. For more information, call (800) 603-0948 or visit www.ColonialWilliamsburg.org.

April 6-8, 2003

57th Williamsburg Garden Symposium

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