



# News

*AHS Programs and Events*

## Garden Conservancy Tours River Farm

DARK CLOUDS and heavy rains didn't dampen the spirits of the Garden Conservancy's Society of Fellows as they toured AHS headquarters on May 8. River Farm was the group's second stop on a tour of Washington, D.C.'s top garden destinations after visiting the White House gardens and before heading to Mt. Vernon for lunch.

AHS president **Katy Moss Warner** greeted the group of more than 50 people before they embarked on a self-guided walking tour of the gardens. Each visitor received a gift bag filled with valuable information and products from AHS national programs. Staff members were available along the tour to talk about the gardens, structures, and SMARTGARDEN™ practices that make AHS one of the premier gardening institutions in the country.

Children's gardening, an important component of AHS's educational initiatives, is supported through the annual Youth Gar-



Mary Ann Patterson, AHS director of national programs and public relations welcomes Garden Conservancy visitors.

den Symposium and the Growing Connection, a course designed to teach the science of growing food to middle school students. AHS Children's Garden Program Coordinator **Nancy Busick** and AHS director of National Programs and Public Relations **Mary Ann Patterson** explained these programs as they guided visitors through River Farm's popular Children's Garden.

AHS Special Projects Coordinator **Trish Gibson** offered a presentation on the Green Garage, an exhibit of environmentally friendly gardening tools, that proved to be a big hit

with Garden Conservancy visitors, along with the maps they received after **Dr. Marc Cathey's** lecture on the new USDA Plant Hardiness Zone map and the AHS Heat Zone map. Despite the inclement weather, the Garden Conservancy's Society of Fellows was able to get a taste of River Farm's rich history and AHS's promising future.

## AHS Gift Shop Gets Facelift

VISITORS TO RIVER FARM this year have been oohing and aahing over the newly renovated gift shop, which shares space with the AHS Visitor Center. Under the direction of Gift Shop Manager **Marianne Polito**, the gift shop opened this spring under a new "old" name—the Cottage Shop—and has been restocked with a greatly expanded selection of high-quality garden-related merchandise.

Thanks to the assistance of several dedicated AHS volunteers, Marianne—who also manages the AHS Gardener's Information Service and volunteer program—has been able to extend the gift shop's hours



of operation. It is now open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and during Hort-Takes programs on selected Saturdays during the summer (see box on page 10).

**Laurie Peters**, a member of the Friends of River Farm (FORF) board of directors, played a major role in the renovation of the shop. Laurie, along with Marianne and members of the AHS Horticulture Department staff, spent this past winter refurbishing bookcases and coun-

AHS volunteer and Friends of River Farm board member Laurie Peters displays some of the popular items in the renovated gift shop.

## Start Saving Seeds!

Now's the time to start checking your plants to see which ones have seeds ready to harvest and save for the 2003 AHS Annual Free Seed Exchange. Collect and store ripe seeds in a cool, dry place. Then look for the seed exchange information and donor form in the next issue of *The American Gardener*. A seed list will be mailed in January. Members who donate seeds to the program will get first pick.

ters in readiness to display an expanded range of merchandise.

Laurie was also instrumental in developing the theme of the Cottage Shop, "A World of Beauty Through Plants," which is reflected in the diverse inventory of floral-related items from different parts of the world. Some of the more exotic items in the shop are donations from Laurie's personal collection, acquired during the former diplomat's travels around the world. Mouse pads, coffee mugs that "bloom" when hot liquid is poured in them, ceramics, and child-sized watering cans are just a few of the products available for gardeners and non-gardeners alike.

In addition to browsing the assortment of garden-related goods in the shop, visitors can also choose from an extensive selection of AHS books published by Dorling Kindersley (DK), such as the *AHS Encyclopedia of Plants and Flowers*. If you would like to purchase one of the AHS books but can't make it

to the Cottage Shop, you can place an order online by going to [www.ahs.org](http://www.ahs.org) and clicking on the "Books" link.

## AHS Intern Program

OVER THE PAST 20 years, more than 100 promising young people have come through the gates here at River Farm to participate in the AHS Horticultural Internship program.

Whether assisting with the Society's annual Seed Exchange, creating new ornamental borders, or researching stories for *The American Gardener*, interns make countless contributions to AHS programs while gaining valuable experience that serves them well as they move into the professional ranks.

Past AHS interns have gone on to become science teachers, horticulturists, plant curators, landscape designers, research scientists, and even editors. "Our horticultural internship program is playing an important role in building the next generation of horticultural leaders," says **Tom Underwood**, AHS director and curator of gardens and buildings.

The AHS intern program is made possible by donations from AHS members and organizations who believe it is important to invest in the future. Our 2003 AHS Intern appeal is currently underway and we are pleased to be able to offer a special incentive to donors this year: Those who contribute \$64 or more (supporting one day of an internship) will receive a complimentary copy of *Legends in the Garden: Who in the World is Nellie Stevens?* Authored by noted garden writers **Linda L. Copeland** and **Allan M. Armitage**, this fascinating book tells the stories of the people

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## Saturday Hort-Takes

AHS's popular "Hort-Takes" series of educational gardening workshops is back. These programs are held rain or shine at 9 a.m. on selected Saturdays through the end of September. See "Regional Happenings," beginning on page 57 for details on upcoming scheduled programs.

whose names are associated with many of our best-known ornamental plants. For a donation of \$320 or more (supporting an intern for one week) you will receive a copy of the book autographed by both Linda and Allan.

For more information and to make a contribution to the special intern appeal fund, please contact **Trish Gibson** at [tgibson@ahs.org](mailto:tgibson@ahs.org) or call her at (800) 777-7931.

## Master Planning the Future

MOVING AHEAD with a new Master Plan for River Farm was the focus of a May planning session hosted by AHS Board Member and landscape architect **Melissa Marshall** at the offices of her firm, Marshall\*Tyler\*Rausch, in Pittsburgh. Members of AHS's River Farm committee used the session to identify important site and programmatic issues that need to be addressed. The Master Plan is expected to be completed by early 2004. Attending the session were **Katy Moss Warner**,



Clockwise from the left: Katy Moss Warner, Joannah Williams, Daryl Williams, Tom Underwood, Melissa Marshall, and Ron Kagawa discuss the River Farm Master Plan during a meeting in May.

AHS president; **Joannah and Daryl Williams**, owners of D & D Tree Farm & Nursery, Inc., in Lake Buena Vista, Florida; **Tom Underwood**, AHS director of gardens and buildings; and **Ron Kagawa**, associate professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Virginia Tech's Alexandria Center.

What would you like to see at River Farm? Please send your ideas to Tom at [tunderwood@ahs.org](mailto:tunderwood@ahs.org), and he will share them with the committee.

—*Pia daSilva and Maureen Hartshorn, Editorial Interns*

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View of the Potomac River from River Farm

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Whether cultivating a sense of wonder in a child, or educating gardeners of all ages to become more environmentally sensitive, AHS and its members are making a difference today. You can ensure we make a difference tomorrow as well.

To become a member of Horticultural Heritage, just notify us that you have named the American Horticultural Society in your will, or otherwise included AHS in your estate plans.

To learn more about how you can support AHS, contact Joe Lamoglia at 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308-1300, (703) 768-5700 ext. 115.

We urge you to consult with your legal and financial advisers to assist you in arranging the best method of contributing. The American Horticultural Society is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. Contributions to AHS are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. AHS is also a registered charitable organization under Section 57-49 of the Virginia Solicitation of Contributions Law; a financial statement is available upon written request from the State Division of Consumer Affairs.

# AHS and MSU Unveil Online Gardening Education Program

by Pia daSilva

**W**HETHER YOU'RE an experienced horticulturist looking to add to your list of credentials, or a gardening novice who wants to turn your brown thumb green, the Horticulture Gardening Institute's online learning initiative may be for you. The American Horticultural Society (AHS) and the Gardening Institute want to help everyone become a successful gardener, whether their "garden" is acres of land or just an apartment balcony.

AHS and the Gardening Institute, an initiative of Michigan State University (MSU), have joined forces to create an "event-centered, online supported" gardening learning program, which is intended to provide people with educational activities that support the rapidly growing interest in gardening.

Master Gardeners, plant enthusiasts, and gardening groups enrolled in the program can view information from gardening experts online, attend hands-on supporting events, and receive feedback on gardening project plans. "With the educational resources now available, this program makes garden education more accessible at every level," says **Mary Ann Patterson**, AHS director of national programs and public relations. "It has the potential to bring the joy of gardening to millions of people who otherwise might not consider taking a gardening class—including those who, because of physical limitations, can't participate in a standard classroom environment."

## INAUGURAL CLASS

Participants in a container gardening workshop held during Washington Blooms!—AHS's spring festival held this



March—were given a unique opportunity to be part of the inaugural class of this online program, which began on May 10. The first course is titled "The Art and Science of Container Gardening."

The 12-week container gardening program features container gardening projects designed to take four to seven hours to complete. The online activities include interactive games, quizzes to test your skills, and "Garden Radio" interviews of experts and step-by-step instructions for generating project plans. These narrated slide shows can be heard and viewed from most computers equipped with a sound card and Internet access at a cost of only \$70.

Garden Radio interviews for the current session cover topics such as "Hanging Baskets and Floating Gardens" and "Containers for Your Health." Presentations derived from the container gardening workshop held at River Farm include AHS President Emeritus **Dr. H. Marc Cathey's** lecture on combining colorful bedding plants, as well as "Bulbs in Containers" by bulb experts **Brent and Becky Heath**, owners of a specialty bulb business located in Gloucester, Virginia.

This online program will be supplemented by regional events at which participants can utilize the skills learned in online sessions. For the time being, these events will be held at MSU, but eventually a network of Event Partners around the country will serve as hosts.

"This learning opportunity is unique because it integrates the online experience with the ability to attend curriculum-rich events, receive feedback on interactive projects and communicate with other avid gardeners and experts in the field," says **Christine Geith**, co-executive director of the Gardening Institute and director of MSU's Online Global Institute.

All the online activities are self-paced, and attendance at regional events is optional. Upon completion of each program, participants will be awarded a co-branded certificate from AHS and the Gardening Institute stating that they have successfully completed the course.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Next spring, the online classroom will focus on the AHS SMARTGARDEN™ program. Four or five additional classes are under development for the years ahead. These lifelong learning programs, currently being developed through the partnership between AHS and the Gardening Institute, are based primarily on the gardening techniques employed by the horticultural staff here at AHS headquarters at River Farm and at MSU.

Anyone wishing to participate in the Gardening Institute's online initiative can register for the program on the Gardening Institute's Web site (see below). Organizations looking for another way to get involved with the program can become Event Partners. This is a sponsorship opportunity for those who wish to support gardening and horticulture and promote the ways plants can contribute to a better overall lifestyle.

For more information about the program, visit [www.gardeninginstitute.com](http://www.gardeninginstitute.com) or contact **Julie Orler** at (517) 432-8265, or e-mail [info@gardeninginstitute.com](mailto:info@gardeninginstitute.com).

*Pia daSilva is an editorial intern of The American Gardener*