

AHS Assists Ithaca Children's Garden Workshop

THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S long track record of involvement in successful children's gardening programs—including establishment of the AHS National Children and Youth Garden Symposium (NCYGS) in 1993 and development of acclaimed children's gardens at River Farm—makes it a valuable resource in the field. Last November, the AHS was invited to facilitate a design workshop for the planned Ithaca Children's Garden (ICG), which is to be con-



Workshop leaders (left to right) Sonja Skelly, Melody Gray, Tom Underwood, Carla Shuman, and Mark Miller worked closely with ICG director Meg Wahlig Cole (far right) during a two-day workshop in November to help plan a new children's garden in Ithaca.

structed along the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway in Ithaca, New York. ICG Board Member and NCYGS advisory panel member **Marcia Eames-Sheavly** is working closely with AHS on coordination of the 12th annual NCYGS, which is to be held in Ithaca this summer (see box, page 9).

Leading the ICG workshop were **Tom Underwood**, AHS director and curator of gardens and buildings; **Mark Miller**, AHS deputy director of national programs; **Melody Gray**, AHS landscape design intern; landscape architect **Carla Shuman** of Walt Disney World Resort; and **Sonja Skelly**, director of education at Cornell Plantations. "We were delighted to be able to bring together the talents of all these children's gardening experts to integrate our community's concept into a workable and exciting design," says **Meg Wahlig Cole**, ICG director.

"This was a great opportunity for AHS to share its commitment to children's gardening programs nationwide," says Tom, who worked closely with Carla and AHS President **Katy Moss Warner** in the creation of the AHS-cosponsored Kid's Garden at the 2000 Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival.

"I was impressed with the vision, creativity, and expertise of all the participants during the ICG design workshop," says Mark, who was involved in the design and installation of the first children's gardens at River Farm during his tenure as AHS horticulturist from 1995 to 1997. "Ithaca is fortunate to be home to so many people committed to realizing a children's garden that is representative of the city's spirit and character."

Chicago Embraces *The Growing Connection*

THE CITY OF CHICAGO has agreed to serve as the flagship city for *The Growing Connection* (TGC), a ground-breaking program designed to teach children the science behind growing food plants and the important role of fruits and vegetables in a healthy diet.

Chicago Mayor **Richard Daley** announced last November that the city had committed to become an official demonstration area for TGC. "The City of Chicago is a leader in the green movement, bringing the beauty of nature to ecologically sustainable urban green space," says Mayor Daley. "I am pleased *The Growing Connection* has chosen Chicago for this project."

"The AHS, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and all the other partners in *The Growing Connection* are delighted that Mayor Daley and the City of Chicago are joining us in this important educational project," says **Mary Ann Patterson**, AHS director of national programs. "Chicago's history of support for innovative urban greening ini-

tiatives makes it the perfect site to demonstrate the effectiveness of *The Growing Connection*."

Over the next several months, TGC officials will be working with Mayor Daley's office to establish a local steering committee. The next step will be to identify advantageous school and community garden sites for project installations and look for potential community partners such as civic groups, restaurants, farmer's markets, and cooking schools.

Currently, schools and youth groups throughout North America are participating in an informal phase of TGC. This spring, the formal component of the program will debut at 10 schools in the United States and 10 schools in the West African nation of Ghana. Students at those schools will conduct experiments growing food plants from seed in standardized growing units called EarthBoxes™, then share their findings with other students, teachers, and scientists through state-of-the-art information technology.

Kits ordered for the informal phase of TGC started shipping this January to participating youth groups and schools. A special Web site dedicated to *The Growing Connection* is now available at www.thegrowingconnection.com. Soon, participants can log on and share their activities and experiments with others. To order TGC kits, call (800) 777-7931, or visit the AHS Web site at www.ahs.org.

Children's Handcrafted Ornaments Deck Holiday Trees at River Farm

CREATIVE HANDCRAFTED ornaments made by children's groups from around the country added a special luster to the holiday trees at River Farm this past December. The ornaments decorated trees representing four themes: Americana (red, white, and blue colors), Lewis and Clark (silver and gold), George Washington (blue and white), and plants and flowers (multicolored).

The children's groups that created ornaments were the **Paul C. Bunn Garden Guides** of Poland, Ohio; **John Adams Elementary** and **Tuckahoe Elementary** in Alexandria, Virginia; **Central Elementary** of Muskegon, Michigan; **Mountain View 4-H** of Horse Shoe, North Carolina; **Henderson County 4-H** of Hendersonville, North Carolina; and **Lauritzen Gardens** with **Castelar Elementary School** in Omaha, Nebraska. The teachers and leaders of these youth groups were among the attendees at the AHS National Children and Youth Garden Symposium, held in Washington, D.C., last summer.



Brightly painted ornaments in the shape of cottonwood leaves decorate a holiday tree at River Farm, left. The ornaments were made by sixth-grade students at Castelar Elementary School and, above, by three- to five-year-olds in the "Lil' Sprouts" program at Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha, Nebraska.

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“Sparkling snowflakes made from recycled tin cans became a creative lesson on the importance of recycling for our diverse students while getting into the festive spirit of the season,” says **Hilari Hinnant**, a first-grade teacher at John Adams Elementary.

Members of the Garden Guides at Paul C. Bunn School submitted quilt-patterned star ornaments for the Americana tree. “The nine guides include students from grades four through six, some with disabilities,” says **Samie Winick**, the Garden Guide mentor. “Their creative spirits were really engaged in making horticultural and patriotic quilt-pattern stars for each state.”

“The fifth-grade class of Tuckahoe Elementary School enjoyed creating their clay Lewis-and-Clark-themed ornaments and are proud to have had them displayed at the American Horticultural Society,” says their teacher, **Laura Keller**.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 2004 AHS National Children and Youth Garden Symposium will be held July 29 to 31 in Ithaca, New York. The theme for this year’s symposium, a joint effort with Cornell University, is “Branching Out: Beyond Formal Garden-Based Education.” Symposium attendees will be able to take advantage of the wealth of field sites and programs available in the Ithaca area, including the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell Plantations, and many more. More information will be available at the AHS Web site (www.ahs.org) starting in February, or call Mark Miller at (800) 777-7931 ext.117.

New Gardens Join RAP Program

THROUGH THE SOCIETY’S Reciprocal Admission Program (RAP), AHS members are eligible for free or discounted admission or other benefits at public gardens throughout North America. According to **Danielle Laday**, AHS Membership Manager, there are now 170 participating gardens, and new ones are constantly being added to the list. “We often hear from our members about much they love the program,” says Danielle. “It is a great opportunity to see a lot of wonderful plants and gardens.”

Three new gardens joining the program in 2004 are **Aldridge Gardens** in Hoover, Alabama; **Rockingham County Botanical Garden** in Brentwood, New Hampshire; and **Georgia Southern Botanical Garden** in Statesboro, Georgia.

Other recently joined gardens include the **Georgia Golf Hall of Fame’s Botanical Garden**, Augusta, Georgia; **The American Orchid Society’s Botanical Garden**, Delray Beach, Florida; **Edison & Ford Winter Estates**, Fort Myers, Florida; **Sunken Gardens**, St. Petersburg, Florida; **UC Davis Arboretum**, Davis, California; **Conejo Valley Botanic Garden**, Thousand Oaks, California; **Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park (LEAF)**, Erie, Pennsylvania; and **The Journey Museum and Gardens**, Rapid City, South Dakota.

For a complete RAP listing, see the 2004 AHS Member Guide, included in this issue of the magazine, or visit www.ahs.org.

Compiled by Angela Taylor, editorial intern for The American Gardener

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