

The American GARDENER

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NOTES FROM RIVER FARM

AFTER A LONG, HOT SUMMER, I seem to get a fresh burst of energy, once the days start getting cooler, just like the plants in my garden. The steamy days of the past summer were well spent, however, as I was able to soak up new information and inspiration at gardens throughout America and at different AHS educational programs around the country.

In June, it was a treat to visit the *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine display garden in Des Moines and the headquarters garden of The Gardener's of America/Men's Garden Club of America, our newest AHS Horticultural Partner. Both gardens contained many exceptional plants creatively combined in small spaces.

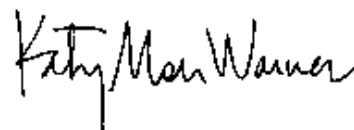
In July, at the AHS National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in Ithaca, New York, I was inspired anew that connecting young people in America to gardens and gardening is a critical part of the AHS mission. On my way back from Ithaca, I stopped to visit a remarkable new Growing Connection Demonstration Garden that just opened in Scranton, Pennsylvania. My tour guides were young people who were discovering just how exciting it is to grow their own vegetables—and sell the ones they can't eat!

Then, in August, I was off to the Alleghany mountains in Virginia to participate in an exceptional garden symposium at The Homestead resort. Nurseryman André Viette, winner of the AHS 2004 Liberty Hyde Bailey award, put together a program there that made me want to come back to River Farm and plant scads of amazing new daylilies—according to André they are a better financial investment than the stock market—and create a water garden. At each of these stops, it was wonderful to have a chance to visit with so many of you, our AHS family of members.

And now, with batteries recharged by the energy and inspiration I drew from my travels this summer, I am excited to get busy planning for the first phase of our River Farm Master Plan and preparing for our Annual Gala on September 25. As I'm sure you know by now, the gala's theme centers on the set of former White House gates that had for years been hanging at the entrance to River Farm. We only recently learned the unique history of these gates, thanks to the research of architectural historian and AHS board member William Seale. The gates are slated for restoration this winter and then will be shipped up to Philadelphia to serve as the official entrance to the Philadelphia Flower Show in early March.

An AHS President's Council event in Philadelphia on March 4 and 5 is the first of a host of new educational programs and gardening events we are developing for 2005 and beyond. Please take time to review the new "AHS National Events and Programs Calendar" (see page 10), which will be in each issue of *The American Gardener* from now on. We hope you will join us at one or more of these events—even if it is for the very first time—as we move forward with great enthusiasm and resolve to build a new and better AHS and River Farm.

Happy gardening!



—Katy Moss Warner, AHS President

