

Volume 6, Issue 1. "Bigger and better yet less frequent"

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Top 10 reasons to join or renew as a *Friend of the Garden* for 2007-2008:

10. We'll let you pinch our coleus (for propagation purposes).
9. You get a cool membership card and decoder ring (just kidding about the ring).
8. Helps pay for student workers and interns (for our garden, not yours-sorry).
7. Free admission to more than 200 public gardens across North America as part of the American Horticulture Society's Reciprocal Admission Program
6. Free admission to the Hahn Horticulture Garden (oh, wait...)
5. One complimentary call to the Director/staff for gardening advice, even if it's the middle of the night.
4. "Friends" discounts for our seminar series, plant sale, and other events.
3. Recognition on a lovely plaque in the Pavilion if you join at the Patron or Ambassador level.
2. The membership form is enclosed; just fill it out and mail it in!
1. At any level—you will be an important part of something wonderful—the Hahn Horticulture Garden at Virginia Tech!

## New Faces , New Opportunities at the Garden

**W**ith the garden's expansion to almost five acres and more coming soon, we had reached the point where a full-time staff of one, no matter how energetic, was simply overwhelmed. Over the past few years, I've envisioned a second "people-related" position as the next logical step if we ever had the opportunity...the demand for tours, seminars, K-12 outreach, and facilities rental has drastically increased as the garden has expanded.

With the help of matching funds from Dean Sharron Quisenberry and the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, the Education and Outreach Coordinator position has come to be. With Stephanie Huckestein moving into it, she can make the most of her talents in working with people (*see p. 2*). In order to fill her petite but most capable shoes as horticulturist, please welcome Paul Chumbley. Previous to this position, Paul ran his own landscape design/build/maintenance company in Pulaski, Va. He is especially talented in creating hardscapes—paths, patios, walls, etc. Paul's easy-going



Paul Chumbley, our new horticulturist. He's easy to spot, just look for the hat...

demeanor belies a ton of energy: he literally never sits still. He will oversee all plant and landscape-related aspects of the garden. Please look for Paul next time you're in the garden! - *Dr. Holly Scoggins, Director*

## "A Midsummer Night's Garden Gala" Breaks Previous Attendance and Fundraising Records!

**T**True, it's only our third annual Garden Gala, but when attendance and net revenue is up 50% over last year, that's a big deal. What a party! More than 240 guests enjoyed the beautiful evening in the garden on Saturday, June 16, complete with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, live music, and the opportunity to bid in both the silent and live auctions. Fantastic plant collections, original sculpture, hand-crafted lawn chairs, and other items went home with happy auction winners.

Thanks to the talents of David Pippin of Richmond, the garden was adorned with opulent urns of flowers and drifting streamers of ribbon. Mike and Susie Hildebrand of Ashland, Va. served as wonderful guest hosts

with Susie helping with the decorations and Mike emceeding the live auction. Thanks also to our generous sponsors and those who donated items to the auctions. The funds raised go toward the garden's operations—internships, equipment, and other necessities.

Our Gala Committee outdid themselves—thanks to David, Stephanie Huckestein, Linda Fiedler, Elissa Steeves, Dawn Lerch, Robert McDuffie, and Lori Greiner; as well as all the others who pitched in. Check out the gala photos (thanks to Robert Lyons and Robert McDuffie) on p. 4 and our web site: [www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/gala](http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/gala).

## Stephanie Huckestein: Thoughts on Becoming the new Education and Outreach Coordinator

I so thoroughly enjoyed my six years as Head Horticulturist! I feel that I really had an impact on the garden and I am proud of my accomplishments. I learned so much and have a lot of really good memories of working in the Garden. I do miss the hands-on work (not the laying of sod, though) and directly overseeing the garden, but I am confident that Paul will do a great job. Though I'm still getting used to the transition, I am very excited about my new position as Education and Outreach Coordinator. You know, since I started the new position I go home clean almost every day! I haven't had to buy new Spray 'n Wash for months now!

Through my broad range of experiences working at the Garden, I found I enjoy the educational aspect of horticulture. I truly love working with people and sharing my knowledge of plants and nature.



My new responsibilities include development of K-12 and public programs, service learning opportunities for undergraduates, and liaison to the public and university community for facilities rental and use. I have been working on my Masters of Science in Career and Technical Education with a concentration in Agricultural Education. My thesis will focus on a needs assessment of how our programs can best serve the local schools.

I will initially focus my energy on developing K-12 school programs that correlate with the Virginia Standards of Learning. I am most interested in inquiry-based and hands-on learning opportunities which will get the students actively engaged in their learning experience. Ideally, I'd love to bring students to the garden since it is such a wonderful resource for learning about plants and nature. Many of the local elementary schools have school gardens that are also great resources. I am excited and looking forward to this new challenge!

*[The new Education and Outreach Coordinator position falls under the administrative/professional*

*faculty category. That this position was created and partially funded by the Garden is proof of the number of people the garden has touched—it would not be possible without the Friends of the Garden membership program, the garden gala, etc. I must also mention that I'm in awe of Stephanie's bride-wrangling skills...she's helped more than 30 couples with their weddings at the garden since the Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion opened last June. - H.S.*



Our first piece of sculpture! "Maid in the Mud" was donated as part of gift given by Warren and Margie Kark. Warren is Professor Emeritus in the VT School of Architecture + Design. He also served as University Architect in the 1980's. Their gift is a reproduction of one of the historic "Garden Sprites" by Frank Lloyd Wright. She was designed as part of Chicago's Midway Gardens complex (1913). Her serene countenance can now be found under the trident maple allee.

## HHG Takes May Tour to the Garden of Paul James, Boones Mill, Virginia

**I**t was a cool and cloudy day; rain was called for but never materialized. Under these subdued conditions, Paul's garden positively glowed with color. Bright orange, fuchsia, lavender, white, yellow, purple....the



That's Paul in the center, guiding our happy group through his magnificent garden.

trees shaded a moss walkway bordered by azaleas. Even the far reaches of the garden had specimen trees that are rare (or not available) in commerce—no wonder famous plantsmen like Dan Hinkley and Tony Avent beat a path to his door see what fabulous new thing he's growing.

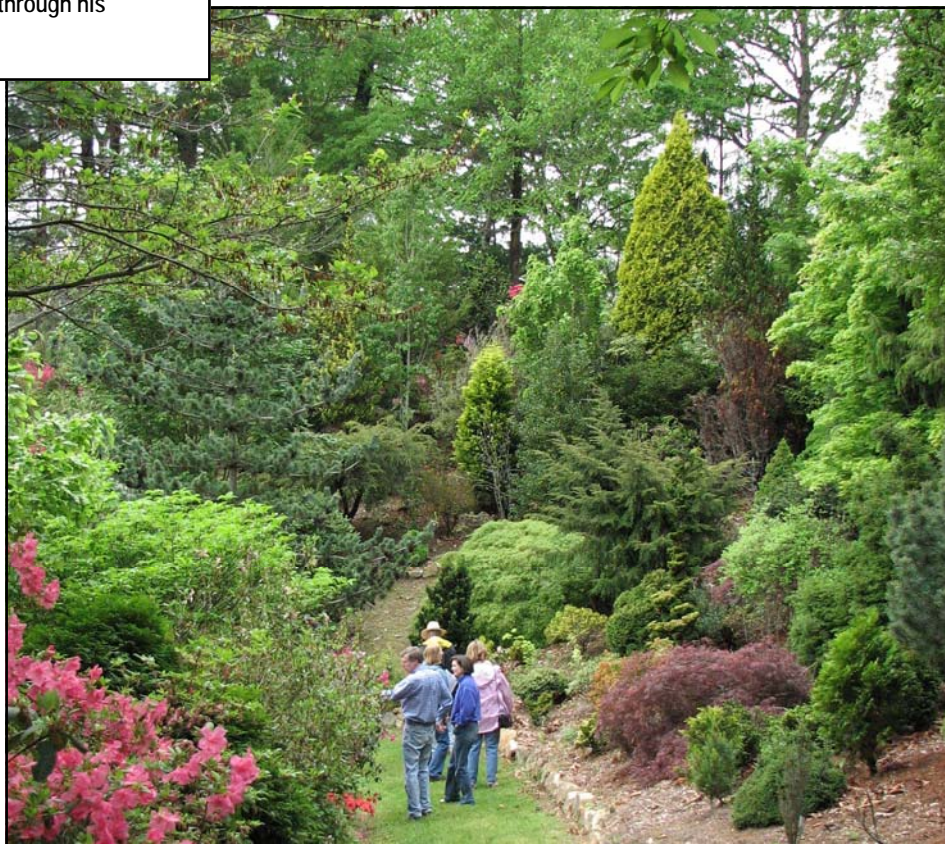
Joel and I picked a luminous blue azalea as our favorite plant of the day. Paul noted its hybrid parentage, who the breeder was, that it was indeed rare, but would we like some cuttings? Paul is renowned for his generosity—many of our tour attendees left his gardens happily clutching seedlings wrapped in paper towels and baggies.

He swears he does all the work himself (we're talking ACRES of maintained gardens). We had no trouble believing him—he has the lean physique and broad, relaxed smile of someone who greets the dawn with shovel and pots in hand, spending an hour finding the perfect spot for this or that plant. Paul's garden is IN the mountains, quite literally. The nearby peaks seem close enough to touch. The gorgeous mountain topography presents the perfect backdrop for his rhodies, azaleas, and conifers (but can be a challenge, gardening-wise). We departed after a few hours of hiking about, in a mental state that can only be described as amazed, slightly dazed, and full of plans for buying more azaleas and rhododendrons to be ready for next spring!

- H.S.

entire spectrum of the genus *Rhododendron*. Freshly-emerged Japanese maples were flushed with chartreuse, apricot, and burgundy. The foliage of gold and blue conifers shone against the green backdrop of deciduous hardwoods. Closer inspection of the beds near the house revealed both native and exotic species of lady slippers, jack-in-the-pulpits, and wild gingers. Thus we were greeted on our first ever HHG-sponsored garden tour!

Sixteen of us unloaded from the vans and gathered around his patio for a general overview of his gardening philosophy. A bit of champagne and strawberries then helped power us through the garden. The sheer volume and variety of plan material was nearly overwhelming. A rock garden of rare and exquisite alpines took up an entire bank; huge



# Gala Photos

(these and more on our web site [www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/gala](http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/gala))



## A Midsummer Night's Garden Gala— Live Auction Action!

As the sun was setting, the crowd of 240+ assembled on the pavilion tent lawn to get down to some serious bidding. That's Mike Hildebrand acknowledging a bid (right side, pointing). Paul Westervelt (to Mike's left) of Saunders Brothers Nursery (Piney River) provided the "color commentary" on the auction items. Winning bids for the live auction ranged from \$200 for football tickets to \$850 for an original metal sculptor by Neil Ames. *Photo: Robert Lyons*

Some very talented area gardeners enjoy an evening out. Suzanne Piovano, Kim Knight, and Mary LaLone (left to right). *Photo: Robert Lyons*



## Summer Interns 2007—Learn by Doing

**A**h, to have the energy of a “twenty—something”. It’s the best part of working in academia—you get to periodically view whatever you’re doing through a fresh set of eyes. Different perspectives and talents are what helps make the garden such a dynamic place, and every summer we get that in spades from our interns. In turn (pun intended), these students get a broad range of experience—from landscape maintenance techniques and greenhouse plant production to helping with garden tours, Volunteer nights, and special events such as the Garden Gala.

Dabney Blanton is our full-time intern. She’ll graduate this December from the Horticulture department with a concentration in landscape contracting, though that may not determine her career path. The Public Gardens Maintenance and



Dabney created all of the hanging basket combinations that grace the pavilion and kiosk.

Management class got her hooked; then she attended the American Public Gardens Association symposium in Washington, D.C. last month. “These experiences really opened my eyes to the tremendous opportunities and diversity in public gardening”. As a top-notch student with a monster work ethic and can-do attitude, she should have no problem excelling in any field she chooses. The life-long Richmond native is also a runner and regularly competes in road races at 5K and 10K distances.



Clayton in action helping to re-sod the bridge.

Clayton Painter is our 20-hr per week intern. He brings to the garden a great deal of experience in turf care—he spent last summer helping manage an Atlanta golf course. Clayton finished his Associate’s degree this spring and will continue in the Bachelor’s program through the Department of Horticulture. Why was he drawn to this internship? The native of Strasburg, Va., states “to broaden my experience in other facets of the green industry plus the flexible schedule allows me to take summer classes.” Clayton has a delightful personality and is polite and helpful to garden visitors. In his spare time, he enjoys boating and golf. We’ve been very lucky over the years to have such high-quality student interns; these two have set the bar even higher!

### Thought for the Summer:

“Home grown tomatoes,  
home grown tomatoes.  
What would life be like  
without homegrown tomatoes.  
Only two things that money can’t buy:  
That’s true love and home grown tomatoes.”

- John Denver, *Home Grown Tomatoes*

*(Sponsor Continued from page 8)*

Paul & Sonya Westervelt, Roseland  
 Bill & Cynthia Sterrett, Blacksburg  
 Gordon Bowman II, Mt. Jackson  
 Anita Tuttle, Spotsylvania

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**Senior, Student, Individual, and Couple***Continued from page 6*

Jan Spahr, Blacksburg

Elissa Steeves, Blacksburg

Connie Stone, Roanoke

Cynthia Stone, Christiansburg

Deborah A. Straw, Spout Spring

Erik &amp; Verlyn Stromberg, Blacksburg

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Gale B. Washburn, Victoria

John E. Webb II, Boones Mill

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Meg Whelton, Christiansburg

David Wike, Chesapeake

Paula Wilder, Blacksburg

Janice E. Woodard, Blacksburg

Ann &amp; Allan Yousten, Blacksburg

***Thank you all!*****Progress on the Meadow**

**G**radings has finally started— Peggy's Meadow is taking shape! Plans have been in the works for more than two years, with the design finalized and approved by various state agencies late this spring. For those who haven't visited the garden in a while, the meadow garden will span the area between the garden pavilion, English Field (baseball) and Duck Pond Drive. The terrace garden portion of the meadow design will be named in honor of Jocelyn Couture-Nowak, the wife of our department head Jerzy Nowak. She was killed while teaching French in Norris Hall on April 16. Many individuals, industry groups, and associations have donated funds toward this and other memorials in her name. Jocelyn was an enthusiastic gardener; in honor of this and her love for all things Francophone, we'll use French common names on the plant labels.



The shortest distance between the mulch pile and flower bed is by cart...and we've been pining for one for years. Paul and Dabney model our new (to us) Workhorse generously donated by Mike Hildebrand of James River Nurseries, Inc., Ashland, Va. Affectionately named "Susie" in honor of Mike's wonderful wife; the turf tires, dump bed and four cup holders (!) make it just about perfect.



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Garden Director, Garden Quarterly and Website: Dr. Holly Scoggins; Education & Outreach Coordinator: Stephanie Huckestein; Horticulturist: Paul Chumbley, Woody Plant Curator: Dr. Alex Niemiera. If you'd rather not receive this publication, feel free to contact us by phone or email.

## Friends of the Garden 2006-2007

**O**ur Friends of the Garden program is now in its fifth year. Many of these 123 folks have been members since the program was revived in 2002. Proceeds from the memberships make up a significant portion of our operating funds—plus “Friends” get perks like free admission to many public gardens across the country, and discounts to Garden Seminars. A huge “Thank You” to all of our members! We couldn't do this without you!

### **Ambassador \$1000+**

Peggy Lee Hahn, Blacksburg  
Robert E. Lyons, Landenberg, Pa.

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*(Continued on page 6)*