

AHTA MAGAZINE

VOLUME 51 | ISSUE 1



In This Issue

Celebrating the 50th
Anniversary of AHTA:

-  Past
-  Present
-  Future



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AHTA Magazine

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The American Horticultural Therapy Association Magazine

Contents Spring 2023

Editor: Debra Edwards, HTR

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Editor's Words

Photo Credit: Genevieve Scott



Wow! The AHTA celebrates 50 years! Thinking back to when I joined in 2011, I was so inspired by all of the compassionate, hard-working people that “think green,” have faith in the human condition and want to share a love of nature and horticulture with all others. In the 12 years that I have been

a member, I was fortunate enough to complete my certificate program, internship and registration, and serve on the Board. I continue to feel that inspiration by meeting so many others sharing the passion for horticultural therapy. Whether you are a practicing HT, landscape architect, medical professional, farmer, or interested observer, we are glad to have you with us in such a unique and dynamic organization. We are all here to support each other by offering our distinctive perspectives and growing the field with networking, supervision, sharing techniques and making our passion contagious!

This issue focuses on “us” together within this organization, highlighting successes from our past, experiences now in the present, and intentions for our future. The past develops our foundation, gives us roots! Presently, we are experiencing growth and positive changes, due in-part to our somewhat new-found ability to meet live with online video calls and other online platforms that make it easier to share ideas. So, it's possible that change will arrive more quickly as we incorporate technology into our methods of the past. And finally, the future of horticultural therapy... our students, new members and newly-registered HTRs! I know there is so much feeling, knowledge and vision among you that may shape the organization! I am hopeful for what is to come and all that may be introduced for our future growth!

What is possible over the next 50 years? Let's travel that path together...!

In hope and health,

Debra 

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AHTA Social Media Outlets



Click the icons to check out the various ways to stay in touch with AHTA.



American Horticultural Therapy Association®
ADVANCING THE PRACTICE OF HORTICULTURE AS THERAPY

Past





The American Horticultural Therapy Association: Five Decades

By Laura DePrado, B.S., HTR, and
Leigh Anne Starling, LCPC, CRC, HTR

The American Horticultural Therapy Association has achieved 50 years. Let's take a walk down the Association's garden path of the last 5 decades. In April 1973, a group of 20 individuals gathered at the Melwood Horticultural Therapy Training Center, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, for an organizational meeting. The organization incorporated in Maryland on October 1, 1973, as the National Council for Therapy and Rehabilitation through Horticulture (NCTRH) with the mission: "The object of the corporation is to promote and encourage national and international programs and organizations striving to utilize horticulture and related activities as a therapeutic and rehabilitative medium." This was to be accomplished by program coordination, knowledge dissemination, information and

communications, and training and education efforts. A short time later, the mission was updated to include the establishment of a professional registration program for horticultural therapists.

In November 1973, the first annual conference, "A Successful Beginning", was held at the National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. As the NCTRH began to grow throughout the 1970s,

dedicated volunteer board members established committees to develop NCTRH chapters, education standards, publications, and formed a Job Bank to help members connect with employers. Employers were charged \$1.00 per listing! A professional registration program was also implemented.

The association's growth through the 1980s saw an increase in membership, the establishment of education programs, and horticultural therapy programs began to seek out professionally

FUN FACTS

In 1974, NCTRH:

- In response to public requests, the Council established a Speakers Bureau.
- The Council appeared in the March *New York Times* article titled "Horticultural Therapy"

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline



CONFERENCES
PRESIDENTS

NOVEMBER 6
A Successful Beginning
Washington, D.C.

1973

OCTOBER 6
A Closer Look
Arlington, VA

1974

Earl Copus
1973-1975

registered horticultural therapists. During this decade, the NCTRH was involved in advocacy work through government programs. The NCTRH published the first Code of Ethics for Horticultural Therapists, and also published the first Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture. A new award was created to distinguish outstanding Horticultural Therapy students in the form of a \$200 scholarship. A member discount program was started that included companies like Gardener's Supply, Hawthorne Press, The American Nurseryman, and G.S. Grimes Seed. One of the most important and significant changes for the Association took place on July 27, 1987, when the NCTRH adopted the new association name, the American Horticultural Therapy Association, Inc (AHTA).

The 1990s were a time of change. In preparation for the new millennium, AHTA was charged with converting records to digital formats and establishing a presence on the internet. With changes in funding and healthcare during this decade, the AHTA continued its advocacy work through membership in the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD).

The AHTA also published the first Therapeutic Gardens Guidelines in the newsletter and began a publication series of AHTA Fact Sheets. To involve members in promoting horticultural therapy, an Introduction to Horticultural Therapy slide show (which was also available in VHS!) and an AHTA Exhibit were available for rent. An important publication to advancing the profession at this time was the first textbook "Horticulture as Therapy: Principles and Practice", by Sharon Simson PhD, and Martha Straus, HTM. By the end of the '90s, the Association closed the Maryland office and relocated to Denver, Colorado.

In the new millennium, AHTA worked to advance the profession through online collaborations and sharing information. The Charles A. Lewis Excellence in Research Award was established and the first AHTA Definitions and Positions paper was published. The accreditation of horticultural therapy certificate programs was fully operating by this time and at one time there were 11 accredited programs. A significant event was National Horticultural Therapy Week (NHTW) in the form of Resolution #92. This resolution was supported by the 109th Congress 1st Session of 2006 by Congressman David Price of North Carolina in formal support of designating the third week of March 2006 as NHTW. By the end of this decade, the AHTA made the move to a management company.

» continues on the next page

FUN FACTS

In 1975, NCTRH:

- Moved from Melwood, MD, to River Farm Estate, Mt Vernon, VA, shared office American Horticultural Society
- Formed a Council of Horticultural Therapists representing Veteran's Administration Hospitals at 3rd annual conference, attended by 15 representatives from Veteran's Administration programs.

FUN FACTS

In 1976, Charles Lewis wrote the history of horticultural therapy in the U.S. and published this in the NCTRH newsletter, Issue 10.

SEPTEMBER 28

Keep It Growing

East Lansing, MI

SEPTEMBER 5

Philadelphia in '76 - Horticultural Therapy in '76 - History, Happenings, Horizons

Philadelphia, PA

SEPTEMBER 25

Down to Earth

Marianna, FL

1975

1976

1977

Paula Diane Relf, PhD, HTR

1975-1979

» continues on the next page

NCTRH-AHTA Chapters

When the American Horticultural Therapy Association was named The National Council for Therapy and Rehabilitation (NCTRH), a chapter system was formed in 1974.

Chapters were spread throughout the United States. The chapters helped promote and advance the profession of horticultural therapy through holding annual conferences, publishing newsletters, and sponsoring AHTA accredited workshops. Some even established themselves as nonprofit 501c3 organizations.

Chapters were identified by state or region. Not necessarily in this order, here is a historical list of NCTRH-AHTA chapters:

- California, the 1st chapter, later reformed as the Golden West
- Kansas State, later became the Great Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri)
- Michigan
- South Carolina
- Virginia
- New York
- Ohio
- Delaware Valley, later became the Mid-Atlantic Chapter
- Carolina chapter (north)
- New England
- Florida
- Indiana
- Texas
- Chesapeake (Virginia, Maryland)
- Northwest (Oregon, Washington)
- Georgia/Alabama
- People-Plant Connection of Northern California, later merged with the Golden West California and became the California Chapter
- Central Rocky Mountains, later merged with Great Plains and became the Mountains and Plains Chapter
- Arizona

Historically, some chapters were able to maintain NCTRH-AHTA requirements and some were not, some chapters merged, others closed. Supporting the AHTA Chapters required a tremendous amount of oversight from the AHTA Office and ultimately the chapter system closed in 2010.

Today, there are many [horticultural therapy regional networking groups](#). See if there's one near you! 🌱

PAST

During the 2010s and into the 2020s, AHTA increasingly focused on professional standards and education requirements to advance the profession. The Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, and the AHTA Definitions and Positions paper were all updated. The association continued advocacy work through events like celebrating NHTW at the United States Botanic Garden, Washington, D.C. The AHTA Newsletter became the News Magazine, now known as the AHTA Magazine. The Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture became a digital publication. The AHTA also changed management companies later in the decade. In the recent past, the association was challenged to navigate the pandemic and successfully offered members webinars and conferences online. A positive outcome of adapting to online services are the member Community Meetings. The AHTA completed a long-term project of developing and publishing an AHTA Horticultural Therapy video and presented the video at the 2022 conference.

Highlighting 5 decades of the Association would not be possible without the efforts of so many people who have plowed fields in significant contribution. We acknowledge and pay tribute! 🌻

Source cited:

Association information obtained from the AHTA historical files.

FUN FACTS

In **1980**, PBS featured NCTRH in "From the Seeds."

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

SEPTEMBER 17
Directions '78
Topeka, KS

OCTOBER 9
Growth and Professionalism
Glencoe, IL

AUGUST 26
The Eighties: A Decade for Discovery, Development and Dedication
Boys Town, NE

1978

1979

1980

Paula Diane Relf, PhD, HTR
1975-1979

William Townsley, PhD
1979

REFLECTIONS FROM PAST PRESIDENTS

Earl Copus Jr.,

The first President of NCTRH and Melwood President/CEO Emeritus

Interviewed by Linda Brown-Kuhn, HTR

In considering the start of NCTRH – National Council for Therapy and Rehabilitation through Horticulture – later to be called AHTA, can you reflect on the main purpose of its beginnings in your perspective?

The genesis of NCTRH began at Melwood, a nonprofit organization in Upper Marlboro Maryland, which I led for four decades, where those with disabilities could gain specific job skills and earn income. By early 1970, Melwood's reputation in horticulture therapy, vocational training and self-earned income was spreading. Professionals from around the world were visiting Melwood and they were also discovering the value of horticultural therapy. Melwood wanted to learn from others, as well as share its therapy programs and entrepreneurial enterprises. In 1972, a group of us from Melwood reached out to other individuals interested in horticultural therapy and that meeting led to the formation of NCTRH which evolved into the AHTA.

What are your favorite memories from the early years of AHTA?

There are many, however, a few immediately come to mind.

- Seeing the dynamic force that individuals like Dr. Diane Relf, (co-founder of NCTRH) brought to the movement (and still does), to believing in the value of horticultural therapy and proving it so.
- The Melwood developmentally disabled participants like Rod-

» continues on the next page

6 Past Presidents



Leaders of the past

From left to right:

KARIN FLEMING, DOUGLAS AIRHART, REBECCA HALLER, GENE ROTHERT, MARIA GABALDO, DIANE RELF

FUN FACTS

In 1983, NCTRH:

- The Council had a horticultural therapy slide set for members to rent.

SEPTEMBER 8

Environments for the Able and Disabled

New York, NY

1981

Merle M. Moore

1980–1983

AUGUST 16

Never Too Old To Grow

Vancouver, BC

1982

SEPTEMBER 25

The Next Ten Years: Growth Through Cooperation

West Lafayette, IN

1983

Ken T. Stoutamire, HTM

1983–1984

» continues on the next page

dy Dolly, who responded to his mother, "Mom, I can't stay home even if sick for my greenhouse plants will die if I don't water them."

- Our first Christmas poinsettias community "card table sale" earning over \$1,000.
- The donated lawnmower powering our first home grounds maintenance, setting the stage for today's million-dollar grounds/jobs contracts.

Please comment on the progression of AHTA, then and now.

Like any product or service, word of mouth is a great contributor of growth. From that desire to learn from others came, year by year, the progression of a highly professional organization – as best appreciated from its web page (ahta.org) and an impressive array of services supporting and promoting the world of horticultural therapy. It is a successful movement creating opportunities for thousands of individuals with special needs. May the Force of Horticultural Therapy and Rehabilitation continue for the next fifty years. 🌹

FUN FACTS

In 1985, NCTRH:

- Received 1 of 70 presidential citations for outstanding private sector Initiative Project
- Participated in INSPIRE 1985 - Int'l Forum and Festival of Arts, Recreation, and Sports - and had a raised bed enabling garden exhibit

REFLECTIONS FROM PAST PRESIDENTS

Diane Relf

Interviewed by Linda Brown-Kuhn, HTR

In considering the start of NCTRH – National Council for Therapy and Rehabilitation through Horticulture – later to be called AHTA, can you reflect on the main purpose of its beginnings in your perspective?

Our first meeting which ultimately led to a national conference and the formation of NCTRH was to identify if there were sufficient programs to develop collaborative efforts in this field. The term Council was intentionally used to be inclusive of volunteers, practitioners and supporters. Both therapy and rehabilitation were used to ensure the breadth of treatment modalities identified as using horticulture were integral to our organizational mission.

What are your favorite memories from the early years of AHTA?

- Excitement of everyone as they delighted in meeting others who shared their vision of helping people through horticulture.
- The appreciation by everyone to have the opportunity to tell about their program and client's response.
- Working with a number of universities that established education and/or research programs in HT, including Kansas State University, Clemson University, University of Georgia, University of New Hampshire, Texas Tech University, University of Maryland, and Michigan State University.

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

AUGUST 19

Strategies for the Future – The Year 2000 and Beyond

Chevy Chase, MD

JULY 21

Striving for Balance – The Horticulturist/The Therapist

Denver, CO

OCTOBER 19

Ideas Into Action

Coral Gables, FL

1984

1985

1986

T. Kent Titze, HTM

1984-1985



Diane Relf and Earl Copus at the 30th AHTA anniversary conference
Provided by: Diane Relf

Please comment on the progression of AHTA, then and now.

As volunteer Executive Secretary for eight years, including two terms as president, I was able to observe growth of the organization to about 800 members with monthly publications, monographs, the start of a journal, annual conferences (some with published proceeding or abstracts, conducted at various universities or rehab facilities and managed by the local membership), workshops, state chapters affiliated with NCTRH, the initiation of a volunteer registration, widespread media coverage and government recognition as an emerging profession. In 1982, NCTRH received a grant to promote the horticulture industry hiring

people with disabilities. Changes in focus under paid staff resulted in a name change but allowed for more finished publications and meetings.

The dedication of AHTA members and the Board of Directors has been outstanding. The explosive growth of Information Technology (webpages, etc.) has made possible contributions by practitioners and supporters resulting in a high visibility for HT/TH, AHTA, and the spread of interest in horticulture for therapy. As the future brings recognition by government, insurers, and healthcare corporations, the profession will grow. 🌹

JULY 26

Beyond People and Plants

Houston, TX

1987

Judy Carrier, HTR
1986-1987

AUGUST 7

Linking With Therapy Professionals

Pomona, CA

1988

Douglas Airhart, PhD, HTM
1987-1989

AUGUST 6

Measuring Progress

Nashville, TN

1989

» continues on the next page

AHTA Grant-Funded Programs Improve Employment for People with Disabilities

By Andrew Zeiger

Historically, people with disabilities in the United States have had low levels of labor market participation and high unemployment levels. Starting in 1982, the AHTA began receiving federal grant funding to improve employment and training opportunities in horticulture careers for the disabled through an innovative job development and job creation program (Davis, 1992).

Census data from the 1980s indicated that the labor participation rate of the 13.4 million Americans with disabilities was 31.6%, compared to 78.9% among the 142.2 million Americans without a disability. Additionally, only 18.2% of the 13.4 million Americans with disabilities were employed full time. A 1980's Louis Harris Poll, which surveyed people with disabilities, indicated that over two-thirds of respondents said they would like to find work (Int. Ctr. For Disabled, 1987). When asked about barriers to employment, respondents mentioned employer attitudes, lack of appropriate jobs, insufficient education and training, lack of accessible transportation, and lack of necessary equipment or devices.

In response to these barriers, the AHTA employment programs were designed to provide education and support specifically to the horticulture industry. In total, five employment projects were grant-funded and completed. The first program, entitled Horticulture Hiring the Disabled (HHD), established educational materials as well as national and regional advisory councils composed of leaders across the horticulture industry. Project HIRE, the second program, created marketing materials to employ workers with disabilities. Project Plantwork was then established to demonstrate how incentives such as employer wage subsidies and personnel assistance could facilitate employment. Project HHD-Transitions

was established to demonstrate a model for how young adults with developmental disabilities could be prepared for employment. The last program, Project Access, created an industry-based matching and screening process to employ Social Security Disability Insurance beneficiaries within the horticulture industry.

The AHTA employment projects ran between 1982 and 1998 and resulted in the placement of 2269 people with disabilities within the horticulture industry. The projects demonstrated that the horticulture industry offers many job opportunities for people with disabilities and that horticulture employers are receptive to hiring people with disabilities. 🌱

Sources cited:

1. International Center for the Disabled. (1987). The ICD survey II: Employing disabled Americans. Louis Harris & Assocs.
2. Davis, S. H., & De Riso, M. S. (1992). Horticulture Hiring People with Disabilities, HortTechnology horttech, 2(2), 183-189.

FUN FACTS

In 1992, AHTA participated in the AmeriFlora '92 event in Columbus, Ohio. The AHTA had a stepping stone placed in the Lions of Central Ohio sensory garden.

► See images on back cover.

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

1990

AUGUST 5

Protecting Health and Habitat in the 90s

Albuquerque, NM

1991

JULY 28

Advancing the Practice of Horticulture As Therapy

Philadelphia, PA

1992

AUGUST 9

Exploring the People-Plant Connection

Columbus, OH

Nancy Stevenson, HTR

1989-1992

Friends of Horticultural Therapy supporting the AHTA

By Debra Edwards, HTR

The Friends of Horticultural Therapy (FOHT) program was established as an affiliate program to fund the AHTA through membership and donors from corporate funding and public support. The FOHT was a non-profit, public organization established as an effort for the AHTA to become financially self-sufficient after its grant-funded years. The purpose of the FOHT was to support the operations of the AHTA and its board, support research and education, promote the public education about horticultural therapy, help develop horticultural therapy programs, produce and distribute the quarterly publication *The Growing Point* newsletter, and publish and distribute handouts, brochures and other information as requested. This strategic area of the AHTA was managed by the "Friends Leadership Work Team", made up of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the FOHT work team and several other Board members.

Grants awarded by the FOHT supported projects which furthered the research or educational missions of AHTA, advanced the profession of horticultural therapy or assisted program development. Gifted monetary donations were also

» continues on the next page

Some articles in *The Growing Point* newsletter:

- Children's HT with herbs
- Tree planting initiatives
- Friends special events
- TN garden club recognized for prison work
- Sensory stimulation in HT
- Therapeutic profession grows from gardening
- Special needs gardening
- Adaptive gardening
- Men's garden club
- Seeds of hope
- Holiday tips
- Teen garden programs
- Therapeutic parks for everyone
- Substance abuse treatment with herbs

FUN FACTS

In 1995, AHTA:

- Was a member of the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
- Had a Trowel and Pruner Society

» See image on back cover.

AUGUST 1

Strengthening Skills

Seattle, WA

1993

Gene Rothert, HTR

1992-1994

AUGUST 26

Roots for the Community

Chicago, IL

1994

JULY 28

Horticulture As Therapy

Montreal, QC

1995

Rebecca Haller, HTM

1994-1996

» continues on the next page

used as investments to earn a return on the funds. The earnings from these investments were awarded as scholarships, financed research projects, and supported other approved activities and pursuits.

The AHTA realized that serving only the horticultural therapy practitioners limited the understanding of the profession. The organization leaders realized they could expand their reach by educating all interested gardening public and promote the access to gardening, accessible gardening, and its benefits. The FOHT made an important difference in the ability to reach the constituency of AHTA and the general public. For example, in 1991 alone, the AHTA was able to disseminate information to people with disabilities, human service organizations, and members of the general public interested in horticultural therapy by responding to over 1,500 inquiries. Over 200 people with disabilities were able to find employment in the horticulture industry through vocational grants. And publications and reprints were funded for the purpose of educating the general public.

In addition, there was a research fund and a student conference fund which allowed horticultural therapy students to attend and present at the AHTA annual conference. The recipients of these awards were determined by an annual competition. 🌱

Horticultural Therapy Blooms as Art and Science

Everyone who enjoys gardening knows that being close to the soil fulfills a basic human need. Horticultural activities can enhance our physical condition, relieve tension and provide a sense of accomplishment. Recognition of these factors leads therapists helping people with disabilities to realize that horticulture provides a viable therapeutic medium for improving physical, mental and emotional well-being. Although horticultural therapy is an emerging science, it is a time-proven art. Ancient Egyptian physicians prescribed walks in gardens for their patients who were mentally disturbed. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, put his psychiatric patients to work growing plants. Rehabilitative care of physically disabled World War II veterans

greatly expanded the practice of horticultural therapy after 1945.

Today, it is a recognized profession that continues to grow as a treatment alternative with wide-ranging benefits for people with special needs. As a result of that growth the demand for trained horticultural therapists has steadily increased, prompting universities to offer degree programs in the field. The American Horticultural Therapy Association (AHTA), established as a professional organization in 1973, offers workshops and training seminars to benefit its membership.

In addition, horticultural therapy outreach programs serve older adults, disadvantaged children, and families-at-risk.

These efforts emphasize health and wellness and teach vocational skills, which can lead to gainful employment in the horticulture industry.



Friends of Horticultural Therapy Advertising page.

Photo by FOHT information obtained from the AHTA historical files.

FUN FACTS

800+
Registered individuals

In its history, AHTA has registered over 800 individuals since the registration process started in 1974!*

**Note this registration includes HTT, HTA, HTR, and HTM over the years.*

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

OCTOBER 19

Historic Routes to New Destinations

Sturbridge, MA

AUGUST 17

Celebrating Diversity through a Shared Vision: 25 Years of Achievement

Grand Rapids, MI

AUGUST 2

Mission Possible: Cultivating Planet Earth in the New Millennium

Albuquerque, NM

1996

1997

1998

Martha Straus, HTM

1996-1998

Maria Gabaldo, HTR

1998-1999

50 Years of AHTA Conferences: Spanning the Country, Cultivating Hope

By Karin Bailey

Over the past 50 years, AHTA members have gathered together across the United States and Canada to share ideas, learn from one another and create a vision for the future of Horticultural Therapy. Each yellow daisy represents an AHTA conference location, the cultivation of hope and the elevation of the field. 🌻



Map graphic produced by Kayla McMillan

OCTOBER 15

Sowing New Seeds

White Plains, NY

1999

JULY 20

Sixth International People-Plant Symposium: Interaction by Design

Chicago, IL

2000

JULY 11

Pioneering the Connection between People and Plants

Denver, CO

2001

Karen Fleming, HTR

1999-2002

» continues on the next page

Certification Timeline: 1973-2022

The history of the credentialing efforts span the entire history of the association. Here is a list of accomplishments:

- **** **1976** - established the professional registration system.
- **** **1982** - conducted and published a horticultural therapy job analysis (Kansas State University) to identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be a horticultural therapist.
- **** **1982** - conducted research to explore content for certification examination.
- **** **1983** - established a competency test development committee.
- **** **1985** - administered a first draft of exam through the NCTRH newsletter.
- **** **1987** - established the first core curriculum for horticultural therapy degree.
- **** **1993** - joined the National Certification Commission.
- **** **1994** - received training on certification program development.
- **** **1998** - postponed certification efforts at this time.
- **** **2005** - revisited certification and established professional standards task force.
- **** **2008** - updated and changed the professional registration levels and curriculum requirements.
- **** **2011** - established credentialing work team.
- **** **2012** - conducted a job task analysis to identify and update the knowledge, skills, and abilities for a horticultural therapist.
- **** **2013** - refined the core curriculum requirements for examination purposes.
- **** **2014** - published the 2012 job task analysis results in HortTechnology, a publication of the American Society for Horticulture Science.
- **** **2018** - developed an additional path to professional registration to recognize advanced education and work experience.
- **** **2020** - approved a first draft of a continuing education program for future certification renewal system.
- **** **2022** - conducted a horticultural therapy job analysis to update the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be a horticultural therapist and published the results in the AHTA Magazine.

PAST

Early books

Provided by Leigh Anne Starling, LCPC, CRC, HTR

Therapy Through Horticulture. Donald P. Watson, Alice W. Burlingame (1960).

Hoe for Health: Guidelines for Successful Horticultural Therapy Programs. Alice W. Burlingame (1974).

Plants As Therapy. Elvin McDonald (1976).

The Melwood Manual: A Planning and Operations Manual for Horticultural Training and Work Co-op Programs. Earl Copus and several authors (1980).

Growing With Gardening: A Horticultural Therapy Training Manual. Bibby Moore (1987).

Growing Together: Activities to Use In Your Horticulture And Horticultural Therapy Programs For Children. Morgan, Betty. (1989).

Enabling Gardening: Creating Barrier-Free Gardens. Gene Rotherth (1994).

People-Plant Relationships: Setting Research Priorities. Joel Flagler, Raymond Poincelot (1994).

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AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

SEPTEMBER 20
Healing Together
Norfolk, VA

SEPTEMBER 19
**Freedom to Grow/
30th Anniversary
Celebration**
Victoria, BC

OCTOBER 29
**Securing Our
Health and
Wealth**
Atlanta, GA

2002

2003

2004

Nancy Easterling, HTR
2002-2007

» continues on page 18

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AHTA

Present



PROMOTING HT

Celebrating National Horticultural Therapy Week

March 19-25, 2023

Each year, the American Horticultural Therapy Association (AHTA) coordinates the efforts of regional networking groups, affiliated horticultural therapy programs, and AHTA members to collaborate in celebrating the profession on a national and local level. By hosting a variety of special events or activities, we are able to collectively elevate recognition and appreciation for our programs and our profession.

Along with posts on the official AHTA social media sites for national recognition of NHTW, here are a few examples of how local and regional groups celebrated:

Bronx, NY

New York Botanical Garden and the Mid-Atlantic HT Network co-hosted a *free* in-person networking event March 19. This event's focus was "TH in Our Community" and discussed NYBG's TH training program

"I totally recommend wrapping this HT/TH event into a long weekend visit to NYBG. It's a world-class 250-acre institution with incredible plant collections and really innovative education and research programming. It's also got a lovely Victorian glasshouse that just happens to be the site of their annual Orchid Show taking place at the same time :). And no, I am not affiliated with NYBG, I'm just a big fan." -Tracy Calla

Chesterfield, NJ

Horticultural Therapy Week was celebrated in Chesterfield at [Fernbrook Farms](#) in partnership with [Final Touch Plantscaping, LLC](#)



Left to Right: New Jersey Department of Agriculture Christina Resiewicz, Fernbrook Farms Becky Corey, Congressman Andy Kim (NJ-03), Final Touch Plantscaping, LLC, CEO Laura DePrado, Interfaith Neighbors, Karyn Moskowitz, (Rear), New Jersey Nursery Landscape Association Executive Director, Lori Jenssen, and Fernbrook Farms Owner, Larry Kuser, Fernbrook Farms CSA Manager, Juliana Lykins, Rutgers University Student, Nico Mitroff, Fernbrook Environmental Education Center, Jenna Collins and Stacy LaMell, Rutgers University Associate Researcher Center, Meredith Taylor, and Writer April Sette. Photo by Steve Kaiser

on Tuesday, March 21. In attendance were Congressman Andy Kim (NJ-03), the New Jersey Department of Agriculture Representative for Secretary of Agriculture Douglas Fisher, along with community leaders including the New Jersey Nursery Landscape Association. New Jersey was the first state in the nation to recognize NHTW.

Kim said, "Horticultural Therapy Week promotes health wellness, togetherness, learning, and improving. Whether it's getting your hands into a local garden or visiting one of our nearly 1000 farms across the 3rd district, I hope everyone of all ages will join me in celebrating the valuable contributions horticulture and horticultural therapy brings to our community every day."

The program "Plants make people Happy" was a collaboration between Fernbrook Farms owners Larry and Susie Kuser, staff, and Final Touch Plantscaping, LLC, CEO Laura DePrado, who specializes in customizing activities and programs for people across the garden state. Participants rolled up their sleeves, engaged their senses in meaningful exercises and planted an array of herbs, and took a tractor tour.

Fernbrook Farms is a multifaceted 230-acre preserved farmland that operates a Wholesale Nursery, Environmental Education Center, a seasonal CSA, Marketplace and an Inn with private events. 🌻

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

AUGUST 26

Tools of the Trade: People, Plants & Practices

New Brunswick, NJ

JUNE 14

Restoring Health and Wellness

Portland, OR

OCTOBER 26

Harvesting Best Practices in Horticultural Therapy

Silver Springs, MD

2005

2006

2007

Nancy Easterling, HTR

2002-2007

PLOWING FIELDS

Seed Spacing: A Lesson on Introversion and Extroversion

By Sara Rodriguez, LMFT

When we prepare to plant seeds, many considerations come to mind in order to ensure the success of our plants. The season, seed depth, amendment of soil, and otherwise can support the chances of germination and eventual harvest. One notable aspect of planting is seed spacing. Too far apart and we are not making the best use of our garden space; too close together and we risk plants competing for nutrition or stunted growth. As therapeutic horticultural practitioners, we find ways to utilize the garden to bolster the mental health and wellbeing of the individuals we serve. We find parallels between the natural processes of the garden space and our own



The seeds of carrots are planted much closer than the seeds of onions as seen in this photo.
Photo by Sara Rodriguez

lives. The subject of seed spacing provides us another opportunity to learn about our gardens and ourselves.

Consider the carrot seed. You can potentially pack several seeds into a smaller space, broadcasting them or planting relatively tight together in a single row. Carrots are surrounded by their counterparts and as thin root vegetable, are not terribly bothered by lacking ample amount of space between each seed. Now consider the corn seed. We do not want to plant corn seeds as close together as we plant carrot seeds.

Can you imagine the difficulties that would arise? Corn seeds are going to want about 10 inches between each seed; enough room to grow, enough room to harvest. The corn seeds are close, albeit not too close. Finally, consider the summer squash seed. Planting these seeds as close as corn is highly discouraged. Squash eventually become very large plants with huge leaves stretching out to photosynthesize and shade the ground for optimum water absorption. It goes without saying, planting summer squash seeds as close as carrot seeds would surely lead to disappointment.

While plants have seed spacing, humans have the concepts of introversion and extroversion. Historically, individuals mistakenly equate the former to being 'anti-social' and the latter to attention seeking behaviors, however, this is a misconception. Introversion and extroversion relate to how we gain energy. In some cases, we gain energy from being around a lot of people or participating in large social events. Other times, we may find that we gain energy by having a conversation with one or two close friends, or gardening solo. Furthermore, introversion and extroversion are on a continuum.

» continues on page 22

FUN FACTS



Photo from Leigh Anne Starling

In 2008, AHTA had a large display case that members could "rent".

OCTOBER 24

Connecting People with Nature
Lexington, KY

2008

OCTOBER 2

Sustaining Health and Wellness through Horticultural Therapy
Pasadena, CA

2009

OCTOBER 13

In Our Nature
Chicago, IL

2010

Lana Dreyfuss, HTR
2007-2010

» continues on the next page

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

'Hope on the Horizon:'

The Power of a Therapeutic Garden To Heal the Wounds of War

INSPIRE · ENABLE · SUPPORT

Photo from <https://flic.kr/p/nRcn5p>

By Kelly Warnick

As Memorial Day observances approach, the world prepares to pause and honor those who have sacrificed their lives in military service. Thoughts also turn to millions of active service, veteran, and ex-service personnel who face physical and mental challenges from their duties. Help for Heroes, the leading Armed Forces and veteran charity in the United Kingdom, recognizes, "While it takes strength to serve in the Armed Forces, it takes a different type of strength to adapt to life after military service."

For many, adaptation back to civilian life is fraught with intense challenges. Many will seek treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, substance misuse, and isolation. Others seek

recovery for traumatic brain injuries and physical wounds. Many have considered suicide. Often times, individuals will present with co-morbid challenges, making their recovery a long and arduous process.

'Hope on the Horizon' Therapeutic Garden

Wanting to make a difference, Garden Designer, Matthew Keightley, joined forces with Help for Heroes. Out of that collaboration, a very special therapeutic garden came to be. 'Hope on the Horizon' is an award-winning example of how a therapeutic garden, designed for the particular needs of recovering veterans and ex-service personnel, serves as an important catalyst in fostering recovery.

At the threshold of the garden are the words, 'Inspire. Enable. Support.' The garden is purposely designed to do that, culminating in a sculpture ('Rim') resembling a hopeful horizon, a visual symbol

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

2011

AUGUST 5

**Recovery & Rehabilitation:
The Role of HT in the
Therapeutic Community**

Asheville, NC

2012

OCTOBER 5

**Forging New Frontiers:
Cultivating New
Landscapes**

Olympia, WA

2013

SEPTEMBER 19

**Honoring
the Past,
Envisioning
the Future**

Minneapolis, MN

Gabriela Harvey, HTR
2010-2013



Photo from <https://flic.kr/p/nRqghB>

to soldiers that they have the power to create and own their future.

A Safe Space for Rest and Solace

Keightley designed the garden to be a calm, contemplative, safe space — a welcoming “get away” from interior environments that may be stressful or intimidating. He generates increasing fascination with the garden through interesting divisions of hard landscaping, hedges, low grasses, and clever path trajectories.

These engaging subspaces offer choices for soldiers in where to spend time and find secluded rest. Soft, overhead enclosures developed by plantings and sculpture provide ample shade. All of this is accomplished with a balance of enclosure and non-enclosure, clear sight lines, and wide paths, all designed to minimize anxiety for soldiers who may be triggered by claustrophobic or hidden spaces.

Nearby wildlife and nature further contribute to the calm appeal of the space. There are birds to be fed, butterflies to observe, plants to be cared for, water to touch, and lessons from nature to be learned. All of this provides soft fascination to the mind and restores mental fatigue from daily life.

A Mirror of the Recovery Process

This garden was designed to mirror the path soldiers must face in recovery. Eye-catching granite blocks are interspersed throughout the garden, symbolic of a soldier's physical health. Rough and unfinished at the front, the blocks become progressively smoother and more refined towards the end. Equally, the plantings represent the psychological well-being of the soldier, similarly transitioning from unrefined to cultivated.

At the beginning of the garden, there are pockets of flowers showcasing deep colors. This represents the beginning of recovery where emotions and past experiences are acute and have a sizable presence in the mind. With progress, the garden changes. Pockets of color become more calm and serene, showcasing flower drifts in whites, blues, and soft tones of purple. The change symbolizes a shift in the soldier's recovery mindset — from intense distress to increasing moments of calm, mindfulness, and new perspectives.

The soldier's newfound awareness and structure is then dramatically portrayed by an avenue of Hornbeam trees (*Carpinus Betula* 'Fastigiata'). The trees, known for their strength and muscle-like

» continues on the next page

FUN FACTS



From left to right: Lana Dreyfuss, top row MaryAnne McMillan, Martha Heinze, Leigh Anne Starling, bottom row Jean D'Amore, Gwenn Fried
Photo from Leigh Anne Starling

In 2016, AHTA participated in the an event at the United States Botanic Garden.

OCTOBER 10

Practice and Research

Lafayette Hill, PA

2014

MaryAnne McMillan, HTR

2013-2015

OCTOBER 13

Research: Shaping the HT Landscape

Portland, OR

2015

Leigh Anne Starling, LCPC, CRC, HTR

2015-2020

SEPTEMBER 16

Meet Me in the Garden

St Louis, MO

2016

» continues on the next page

gray bark, boldly direct the eye towards the sculpture symbolizing a hopeful horizon. This dramatic portion of the garden — full of color, sensory plants, and noticeable structure — signifies the end of recovery where the individual is tapping into inner strength and resources, planning the future, and reconnecting with the world.

'Walking on Water' Reflection Pool

A special feature of the garden is what Keightley calls 'Walking on Water.' He created a reflection pool and added granite blocks that appear to float above the water, honoring the soldiers' ability to perform unimaginable feats during war, as if they were "walking on water." Keightley designed this area for reflection and healing, pulling in images of the sky and surrounding plants. It is a special space for soldiers to remember their sacrifice, mourn, and move forward.

'Hope on the Horizon' resides at Chavasse VC House, a Hope for Heroes establishment, in Colchester, England. Since 2014, the garden has been inspiring and enabling soldiers to heal from war. 🌻

About the author:

Kelly Warnick, BA, Juris Doctor, AAS Horticulture, and Certificate in Horticultural Therapy. Kelly has a multi-faceted background in greenhouse, garden center, landscape design, and floriculture settings, as well as evidence-based outcomes and legal advocacy. She is currently completing her internship for HTR credentialing.

Sources

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Each individual has tendencies to be either at any given time. Sometimes we feel like a carrot seed, very comfortable with being surrounded by others and closing the distance. Other times we feel like a squash seed, providing ourselves the grace and space to sit with oneself. Regardless of how we 'space' ourselves between others, we as human beings are all social creatures, sometimes craving the masses and other times rejuvenating with a quality 1:1 conversa-

tion. Regardless, we connect one way or another in order to thrive and gain energy. Are you feeling like a carrot seed today, a squash seed, or somewhere in the middle like a corn seed? 🌻

About the author:

Sara Rodriguez serves on the Board of Directors for the American Horticultural Therapy Association. She has been in the mental and behavioral health field for 19 years and is a licensed Clinical Therapist in a Community Mental Health setting.

FUN FACTS

In 2017, AHTA moved from the Pennsylvania based management company to the current Seattle based company, SBI Association Management Company.

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline

CONFERENCES

PRESIDENTS

2017

SEPTEMBER 8

Community Connections through Horticultural Therapy

Burlington, VT

OCTOBER 5

Planting with a Purpose: Engaging in HT

Denver, CO

2018

Leigh Anne Starling, LCPC, CRC, HTR

2015-2020

ACTIVITY

Topiary Structures and Sobriety

By Matthew Janson, CTRS, HTR

This is a wonderfully therapeutic activity for many populations, including inpatient clients about to discharge from a treatment program. This activity may be used after discharge as an analogy for continuing self-care and use of therapeutic tools at home and in the community. The framework of the topiary structure becoming a metaphor for giving future growth structure and form.

Topiary structures, otherwise known as shrubbery sculptures, are a beautiful sight in any garden. They add a unique and eye-catching touch to the landscape and are surprisingly easy to make with just a few simple materials.

One of the most versatile and cost-effective materials you can use to make a topiary structure is a coat hanger or stiff wire. To start, you will need to gather your materials.

Materials needed:

- Coat hanger
- Garden scissors
- Wire cutter
- Flower pot
- Soil
- A selection of cuttings such as ivy, boxwood, rosemary, and ferns.



Instructions:

1. The first step is to straighten the coat hanger. This can be done by bending the hanger back and forth until it is straight. Alternatively, just use a stiff wire.
2. Once the hanger is straight, use the wire cutter to snip off the curved ends and have your participants bend the wire into a shape. Make sure to have the shape long enough to tuck one portion into the flowerpot
3. Place the structure into a flowerpot and fill with soil. You may need to place some small stones in the very bottom to anchor the structure.
4. Finally place your cutting into the pot next to the structure.

As time passes, the care of the plant continues as participants weave the new growth onto the shape.

Discussion questions for your participants:

- Is it ok if the plant doesn't grow perfectly onto the structure you made?
- How does the structure relate to what you've learned in treatment?
- What framework will you need in your life? 🌹

FUN FACTS

In 2021, AHTA:

- Established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force.

OCTOBER 4

Digging in Together

Grand Rapids, MI

2019

2020

Erin Backus, CRC, HTR

2020-2021

OCTOBER 29

The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-being & Social Development (with IHS and IPPS)

Virtual Symposium

2021

Derrick R. Stowell, PhD, CTRS, HTR

2021-2022

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BOOK REVIEW

High-Quality Outdoor Learning: Evidence-based Education Outside the Classroom for Children, Teachers and Society

Editors: Rolf Jucker and Jakob von Au 2022

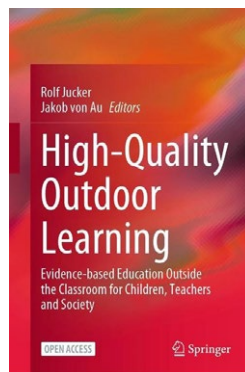
Review by Kelly Warnick

This open access publication, introduced in late 2022, holds a wealth of carefully selected, high-quality research on nature-based learning (NBL). Intending the book to be an extensive compendium of best evidence on numerous NBL topics, the editors pulled in a wide array of specialists to share their findings.

The Book's Emphasis on NBL Studies

As horticultural therapists can attest, NBL is more than just being in nature. It is about engaging with nature. Ample studies in the book show that learning is more profound and long-term when education takes place in a vibrant, real world learning environment that activates as many senses as possible and encourages interaction and self-guided involvement.

The research shows that NBL fits well into this formula. Learners who are actively moving and engaging with nature are showing increased cognition, attention, connection, self-confidence, sense of agency, and physical/emotional well-being. Environmental awareness is also fostered, helping learners who are wrestling with sustainability challenges. The evidence is effectively showing that high-quality outdoor learning programs are unlocking the untapped potential of learners and building



the competencies these learners need to navigate through 21st century challenges. Incorporating NBL in instruction enhances academic performance over traditional instruction and boosts learner engagement.

The Book's Emphasis on Research of the Highest Quality

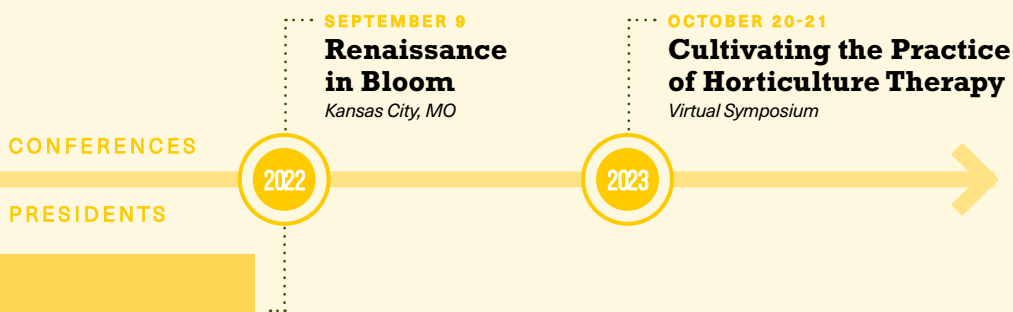
The editors place substantial focus on ensuring high-quality research endeavors. They point to an extensive meta-study on the impact of outdoor learning which found only 13 studies – among a group of 7,830 – that met reasonable methodological research standards.

The editors provide numerous examples of thoughtfully conducted research, with the intention that the examples can serve as templates for those conducting research in the future or those who model their professional practice on NBL research. In addition, various specialists showcased in the book identify a litany of future research initiatives that are needed. 🌱

About the author:

Kelly Warnick, BA, Juris Doctor, AAS Horticulture, and Certificate in Horticultural Therapy. Kelly has a multi-faceted background in greenhouse, garden center, landscape design, and floriculture settings, as well as evidence-based outcomes and legal advocacy. She is currently completing her internship for HTR credentialing.

AHTA 50th Anniversary Timeline



Future

Progress & Evolution



Future of AHTA

The American Horticultural Therapy Association is 50 years old! Times have certainly changed since AHTA began. The AHTA's rich history has been the foundation of this great organization. As we look to the future of AHTA, we recognize the limitations and opportunities AHTA has in moving forward. The AHTA has a vision of CHANGE for this and the coming years. The association is taking this year to move in the direction of inclusion, diversity, and collaboration. The board of directors is examining our policies and procedures to remove barriers that may restrict others from accessing the profession of horticultural therapy. We are working on increasing membership and our number of professionally registered horticultural therapists. We are moving towards the exam development for the HT-BC (Horticultural Therapist-Board Certified). We are hosting virtual community meetings, webinars, and this year's virtual conference to reach out to a wider audience. Our social media presence is expanding. Our Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture will soon have open access. These are exciting times. Our monthly newsletter reports on the current changes happening.

There are risks in change, but the benefits outweigh the risks. As Clarissa Pinkola Estes, an American poet, post trauma specialist and Jungian psychoanalyst, the author of "Women Who Run with The Wolves" stated, "When a great ship is in the harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for". The AHTA is now out of the harbor. I invite you to come aboard during these exciting times of change!

Gratefully,

Lana Dreyfuss, LPCC, LCADC, SEP, HTR
President of AHTA

SAVE THE DATE!

AHTA 2023: 50 Years of Cultivating Multicultural Therapy
October 20-21, 2023 | Virtual

AHTA 2023: 50 Years of Cultivating Horticultural Therapy will be virtual this year! The virtual format for AHTA 2023 will certainly be different, but it creates the opportunity to reach a more expansive group of horticultural therapists from around the world. The conference format will use technology that has worked well for other recent online conferences to emphasize virtual discussion during the conference event, including small-group engagement for poster presentations. "Going Virtual" also will allow our association's conference to reach a wider audience to match the diverse needs of professionals at all stages in their career. We look forward to supporting continuing education and development, and facilitating networking opportunities at this year's conference!

[Stay up-to-date here!](#)

HTR PROFILE

Erica Wharton, HTR



Interviewed by: Debra Edwards

Tell us about your background and education. Have you always worked in the field of horticultural therapy?

I wish I had found out about horticultural therapy years ago! I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from New Mexico State University. After finishing school, I moved to Loveland, Colorado and worked as a software developer for several years. When I was eventually laid off, I started volunteering with a local nonprofit that supports foster and adoptive youth. They ended up needing a new executive director. I applied and was hired for the position and ran that agency for over ten years. This is where my passion for youth facing challenges bloomed. After ten years, I grew tired of the administrative work and wanted to get back to working with youth directly. I had hoped that I could combine my passion for working with youth with being in the garden. I later learned about horticultural therapy and almost instantly knew that this is what I wanted to do. I contacted Colorado State University and began the process of returning to school.

How did you get your start in horticultural therapy? When did you become a horticultural therapist?

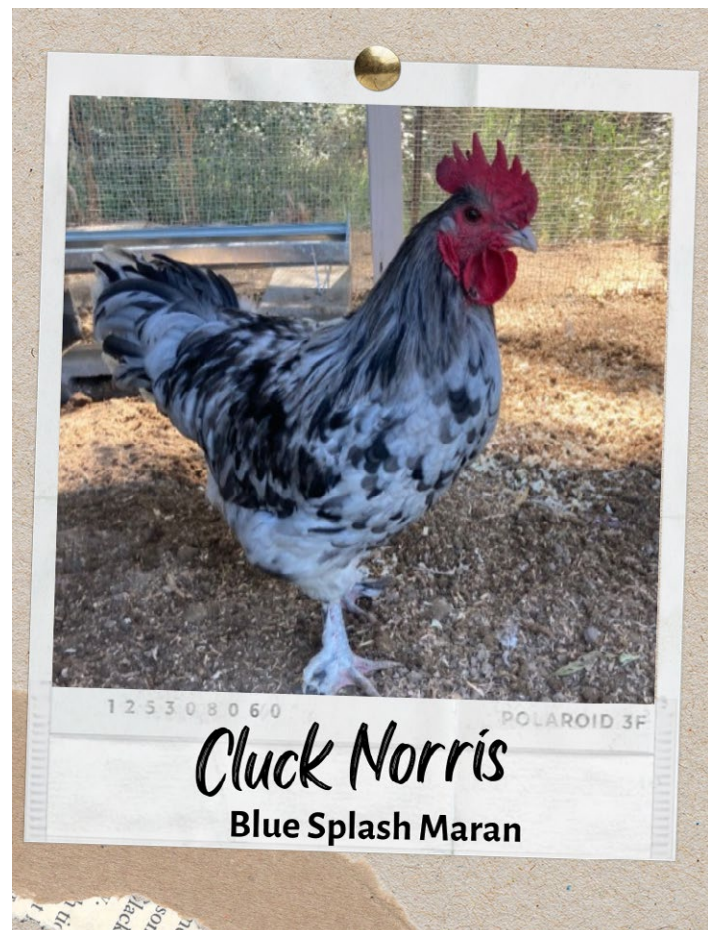
When I finished classes for horticultural therapy registration in the fall of 2019, I started an internship with a local agency that provides grief support. I was their first horticultural therapist, and they were not quite sure what to do with me. Since I love a good challenge, I latched onto an art therapist who ran grief groups and convinced her we needed to add horticultural therapy to her list of interventions for the group. In January 2020, I ran my first group that combined art therapy and horticultural therapy for adult women who had lost their mothers. It was fantastic! I was hooked. So was the art therapist. Shortly after that, COVID struck, and I lost my internship and my supervisor became unreachable. It was a rough time for me—as it was for so many others. Since my internship was unpaid, I was also working limited hours at Loveland Youth Gardeners (LYG) overseeing their programs. When COVID hit, LYG also found themselves at a crossroads. They had no dedicated garden space and extremely limited funds. Their executive director,

Jessica Morgan, was faced with closing their doors or finding a new garden and rebuilding again. Jessica took a risk and asked me to help her build a new urban farm which we succeeded in doing. Once the garden was built, and I had a summer of programming under my belt, I searched for another supervisor and found Linda Hellow, HTR. I was able to use my new full-time job as the program director at LYG for my internship hours. I am happy to report that, in November 2022, I received my horticultural therapy registration.

What has been your experience in developing a career in HT?

I was without an internship or a supervisor and I felt utterly defeated. I spent considerable time looking for a new internship and supervisor and found nothing. I was at a loss. I am so grateful that I was able to put all my energy and time into building this new farm for Loveland Youth Gardeners. I could have easily given up, but, since the time I spent building this farm helped me

» *continues on the next page*



Chuck Norris.
Photo by Erica Wharton

SIDEBAR

AHTA Community Meetings

By Nicole Magor, M.S.

The AHTA's bi-monthly community meetings are held at 7:30pm EST last Thursday of that month. These meetings are all about making and building connections, strengthening our networks, growing the profession, new learning, and collective engagement. On May 25th we will celebrate the AHTA's 50th Anniversary. Join us virtually as we celebrate the roots and branches of the AHTA, honor the organization's history, those who contributed to making AHTA what it is, and get excited about the future. Come fellowship with other members, as we learn more about the history of AHTA, and participate in fun activities.

Our July Community Meeting held on July 27th will offer an opportunity to grow our cultural competency, as we learn about and celebrate diversity. The AHTA will host a panel discussion on the way other cultures use and view plants for healing. At this meeting we will delve into diverse perspectives on horticultural therapy outside of the Eurocentric/Western hegemony, to better understand how therapeutic horticulture has been incorporated into communities, languages, and cultures. If you or someone you know would like to join our panel, please contact R. Nicole Magor at ms.magor@gmail.com.



to lean into the unknown. My first summer on the farm I ran a new vocational horticultural program for youth facing challenges and it reminded me that this was what I was called to do. It gave me the energy to search for another supervisor and complete my requirements for registration.

Are you conducting any research in horticultural therapy? Can you tell us what your research focus is?

Currently, we are not doing any official research in horticultural therapy. We do collect a lot of data on our programs. We hope to do more in the years to come.

Can you describe the steps you took and the resources you utilized throughout your career to develop HT programming?

I have spent a great deal of time reading books and researching other horticultural therapy programs. I was very lucky to have programming here at LYG that I could leverage. I took that and adapted it from therapeutic horticulture to horticultural therapy. I then took my high-level ideas and had many coffees and lunches with social workers, high school counselors, special education teachers, and other therapists. They helped me to better understand what our kids needed and how best to bring that to our farm. I went to any training I could find on social and emotional learning and nature-based education. I also became a Colorado Master Gardener so I could keep my horticultural skills fresh. I helped to revamp the Rocky Mountain Horticultural Therapy Network regional group to provide a network for support and to help grow the profession in our area.

How did horticultural therapy develop at your facility and what is the present status of this program?

Loveland Youth Gardeners is a 26-year-old agency that was started by a social worker who knew the healing powers of the garden. Her legacy is why we are here today. We are starting the third growing season of our farm, The Good Enough Farm, and our programs are growing quickly. Not only do we have our Leadership Exploration and Development (LEAD) program that runs in the summer, but we now have our Repair to Grow programs. We partner with a variety of local agencies to provide horticultural therapy to their already established groups.



Produce sold.
Photo by Karen Collins

Do you have some favorite plants and activities you use in your HT programs?

I have never met a plant that I don't love. I like to talk about mint. We all know it's the bully of the garden. The flora is strong in both scent and footing. I love its tenacity. Since it spreads underground through its rhizomes, it's like our emotions. When left unattended, both the roots and our emotions can be overwhelming. Regarding activities--anything that gets us dirty! I just wrapped up a winter sowing project with one of my Repair to Grow groups. It is a perfect winter classroom activity. We get our hands dirty, and we dream of warmer weather when we can get outside and plant these new seedlings.

Do you accept HT Interns? How does your internship work at your facility?

We do! Horticultural therapy interns work with me to help plan and run programming. We have many opportunities for our interns to run groups, plan interventions, and create program evaluations and budgets. Our farm provides interns with plenty of space to

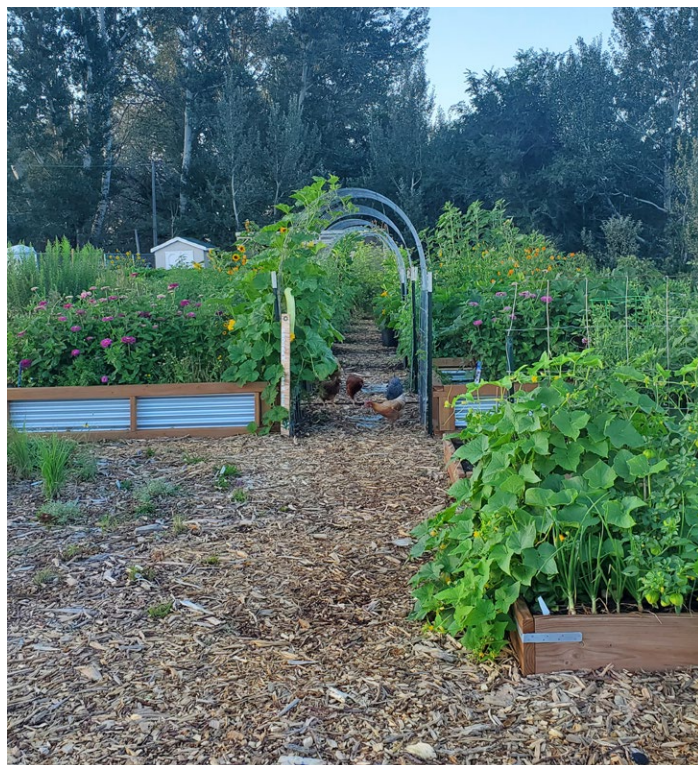
execute their long-term project requirements for registration. Flexible hours may be part or full time. We offer a stipend for our interns. Also, our new executive director, Kelly Robenhagen, LCSW, will help to teach the mental health component which is vital for our horticultural therapy programs. To learn more, please email me at programdirector@lovelandyouthgardeners.org.

Do you have personal perspectives to share with present or future horticultural therapists?

I have come across many individuals who are doing horticultural therapy but are not registered. Many have expressed frustration with finding supervisors and internships near them. I would tell them to not give up. Just keep swimming. Join one of the many regional horticultural therapy groups (The Rocky Mountain Horticultural Therapy Network would love to have you!). Network like crazy. Call me--I will be your supervisor. 🌹



Farm work day.
Photo by Lori Mack Photography



Good Enough Farm.
Photo by Erica Wharton

SIDEBAR

Telehealth Guidelines Revised

By Derrick Stowell, PhD, CTRS, HTR,

The AHTA published telehealth guidelines for internship supervisors in September 2020. These guidelines have been revised and posted in the [Member Center](#). 🌹

SIDEBAR

Grandfather Clause

By Derrick Stowell, PhD, CTRS, HTR

In 2013 the AHTA made changes to the coursework required for professional registration. To give time for applicants to adjust to those changes, the board created a grandfather option. That option is still in place.

AHTA recognizes that many members started their pursuit of professional registration under the old Option B (the standards in effect before October 1, 2013) where individuals randomly selected courses from a list of horticulture and human science topic areas. AHTA does not want to discredit this work that many individuals started in the years prior to October 1, 2013. The grandfathering period is based on how many courses an applicant has taken prior to this date. If six (6) or more courses for professional registration were taken before October 1, 2013, you will be reviewed under the old Option B (the standards in effect before October 1, 2013).

A copy of the grandfather clause can be [found online here](#).



EDUCATION & TRAINING

HTI - The Horticultural Therapy Institute

By Christine Capra, Program Manager,
Horticultural Therapy Institute

Training in the field of horticultural therapy has evolved over the years, encompassing a variety of learning formats. While online learning is a convenient method, nothing compares to the value of face-to-face interactions, a recent graduate of the Horticultural Therapy Institute's (HTI) certificate program noted in a class evaluation. To that end, one of the unique advantages to HTI's certificate program is the opportunity for students from around the country to attend classes often at sites that showcase horticultural therapy (HT) services in a variety of settings. This high-touch field benefits from in-person learning and HTI is dedicated to continuing to offer at least one of each of its certificate classes in this format. There is no substitute for the opportunity to network with fellow classmates, explore horticultural therapy sites, learn from HT professionals and in some cases work hands-on with clients. In the HT Programming class at HTI students have that very occasion. "Getting to work with the students with disabilities was excellent. I very much enjoyed having access to the instructors as well. The social time with students after hours was bonding and would not have been possible if not in person. I feel I made lifetime friendships over the course of those days," said one recent HTI student.

This fall, the Institute will offer an in-person Fundamentals of Horticultural Therapy class at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. There, HTI graduate and registered Horticultural Therapist (HTR), Irene Barber, who coordinates and runs the growing horticultural therapy program on-site, will provide an in-depth tour of the universal-access garden-space where HT programming occurs. Students will also hear from other professionals in the area.

The course will introduce the profession, practice, and types of programs



*A past HTI class at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens.
Photo by Christine Capra*

utilizing horticultural therapy, as well as the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical goals for the varied people served. Students review and discuss professional literature in the field and are exposed to resources for further exploration as well as learning skills crucial to the profession. This four-day intensive (Oct. 12-15, 2023) in a horticulturally rich environment is the perfect opportunity to begin a horticultural therapy journey.

For those considering a career in HT, joining like-minded students in Maine for this certificate class is an ideal time to start. "Face to Face trainings are always more beneficial due to the interaction and constant learning that takes place amongst the class. I loved the program's approach to all aspects of being a strong HT provider in that it is important to be grounded and to continue self-care so that you can offer your best self to others," said a current HTI student.

For more information on this class or to enroll visit www.htinstitute.org or email program manager Christine Capra at ccapra@htinstitute.org.



A past HTI class at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens.
Photo by Christine Capra

SIDEBAR

New Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives

By Nicole Magor, M.S.

Heritage Awareness Months and Identity Recognition Days

Please join our celebration of the cultures and contributions of historically marginalized communities by recognizing and commemorating heritage months and identity acknowledgements throughout the year. The AHTA understands that the celebration and acknowledgement of these cultures is not time-limited, our goal is to use these observances to become more culturally competent, raise the visibility of our organization's diversity, and to advance our growing DEI efforts. These recognitions provide the AHTA community an opportunity to showcase the contributions that diverse groups of people are making to the profession of horticultural therapy and therapeutic horticulture. They also provide a chance to learn more about the horticultural traditions, history, and experiences of the diverse people we serve, and who are members of the organization. 🌹

SIDEBAR

Internship extension due to Covid-19 Pandemic

By Derrick Stowell, PhD, CTRS, HTR

In 2020, the AHTA allowed for an extension of internship hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, AHTA is extending this through December 2023. Interns who started an internship during the pandemic or their internship was interrupted because of the pandemic have until December 31, 2023, to complete their internship hours. Beginning January 2024, AHTA will reinstate the 2-year time frame for interns to complete their internship. If this presents a hardship, please **contact the AHTA Office.**

Fun Facts Photos:



AHTA participated in the AmeriFlora '92 event in Columbus, Ohio. The AHTA had a stepping stone placed in the Lions of Central Ohio sensory garden. Photo from the AHTA historical files



AHTA's stepping stone placed in the Lions of Central Ohio sensory garden. Photo from the AHTA historical files



JOIN THE AHTA TROWEL AND PRUNER SOCIETY

Do you have an area of special expertise that you might share with HT colleagues?

Would you like to receive technical assistance in a specific area from a colleague? Would you enjoy being a mentor, helping other HTs, meeting new colleagues while strengthening the HT profession?

Then, join the Trowel And Pruner Society. Also known as **TAPS**. Also known (by those unfamiliar with garden implements and working the soil) as the Technical Assistance Providers Society.

The way **TAPS** works is simple and friendly. You volunteer for **TAPS**. AHTA disseminates this information. Colleagues may contact you or you may contact them for Technical Assistance. You determine the type and amount of Technical Assistance you exchange. Charter members of the Trowel And Pruner Society are work team members: Rebecca Haller, HTM, Pastor J. S. Hering, David Houseman, M.B.A., Sheila Kelly, Dale R. Lafitte, P. Diane Relf, Ph.D., Dale Sokkary, Ph.D., and Sharon Simson, Ph.D. (Team leader).

To become a member of the Trowel And Pruner Society complete the Trowel And Pruner Society Application and mail it to: Trowel And Pruner Society, AHTA, 362A Christopher Avenue, Gaithersburg, MD 20879.

Please join **TAPS** by sending in your reply now. Everyone has something special to offer. Everyone could use some assistance. A complete list of **Trowel And Pruner Society** members will be disseminated by AHTA. **Trowel And Pruner** members will also have an opportunity to meet one another at the annual AHTA conference this July in Montreal.



In 1995, AHTA had a Trowel and Pruner Society. Photo from the AHTA historical files

AHTA MAGAZINE

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We are always looking for fresh voices to be heard in the *AHTA Magazine* so send us your stories by submitting them [here](#).

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