

VNLA News

Summer 2023

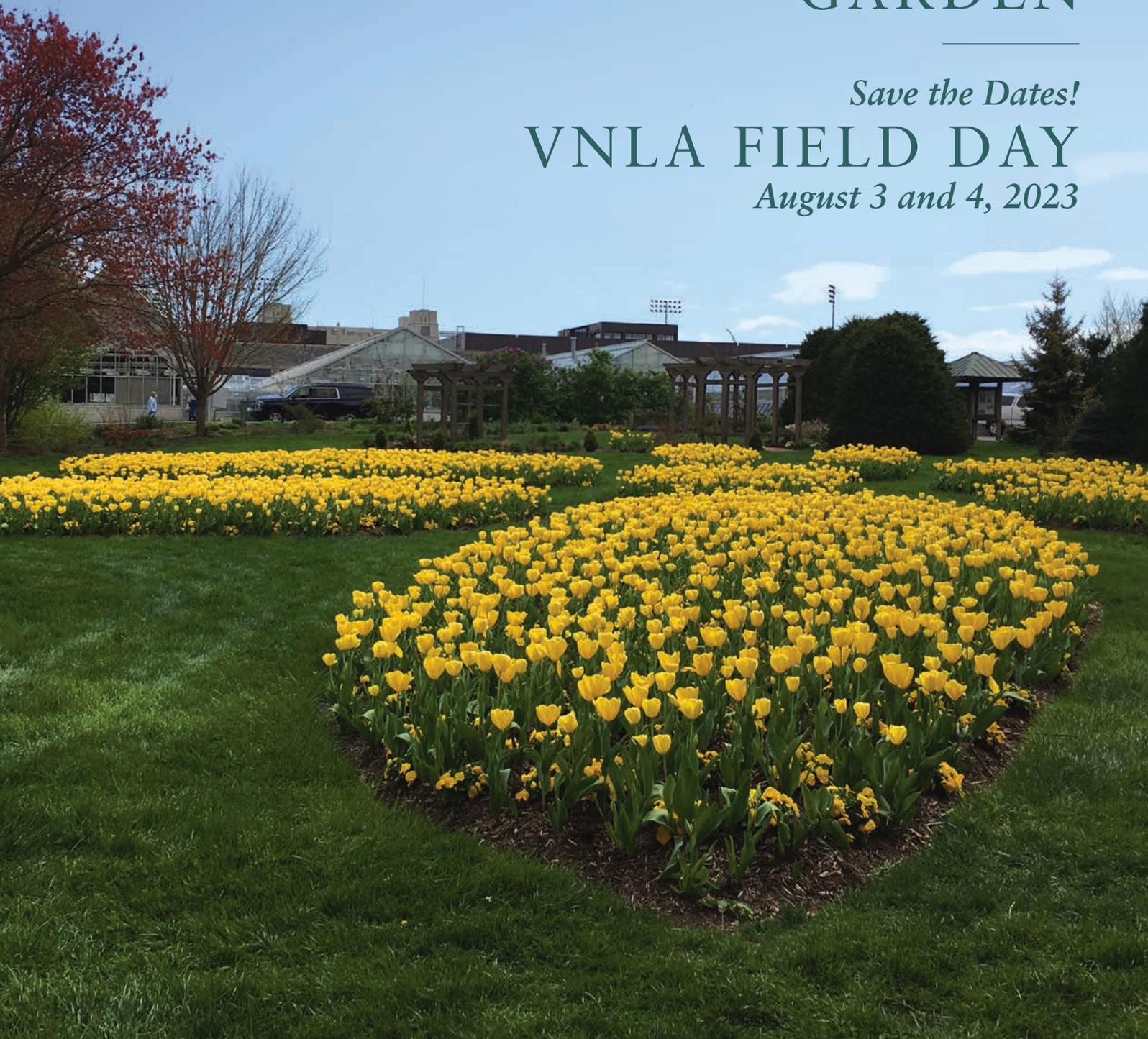
The Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association Magazine

Highlight on HAHN HORTICULTURE GARDEN

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VNLA FIELD DAY

August 3 and 4, 2023





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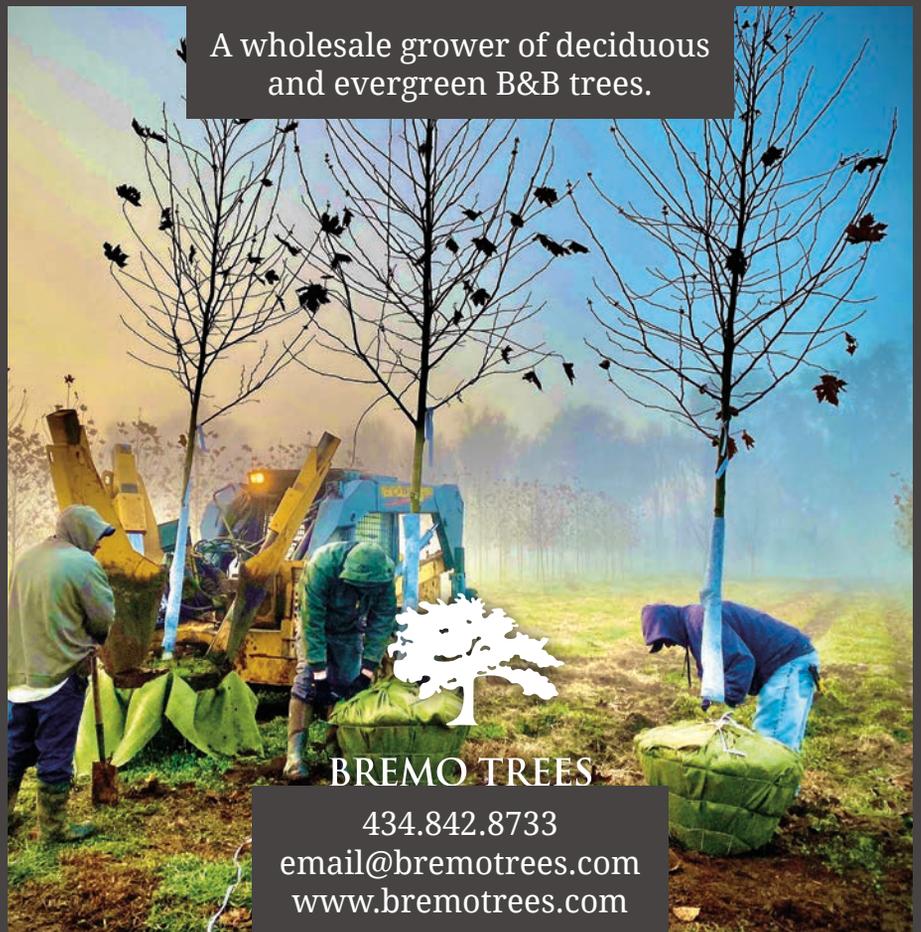
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On the cover: Annual beds feature spring plantings, like these yellow tulips, and an additional summer planting that is installed in late May.
Photo by Scott Douglas.

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HAPPY SUMMER!



While I admit it can be a bit of a challenge to pen a President's letter in April for the VNLA summer newsletter, we all know it's part of a publication process and related timelines. I hope everyone had a record-setting spring and you are pleased with results! What a wild ride temperature wise. Seems we experienced all seasons in one day a few times this spring. That is Virginia for you.

The VNLA is busy planning Field Day August 3 and 4, 2023.

A HUGE thank you to our hosts!

Hahn Horticulture Garden • Lane Stadium • Riverbend Nursery

While many details are still being finalized, the program for field day includes:

- Native-focused educational talk from Peggy Singlemann: Creator, RVA Gardener, Host and co-Producer, *Virginia Home Grown*, VPM/PBS, Director Emeritus of Horticulture, Maymont.
- Update on what is new and interesting in the fight to control the dreaded Red-headed Flea beetle, from Dr. Alejandro Del-Pozo: Assistant Professor of Entomology | Applied Insect Ecology — Turfgrass and Ornamentals | Agricultural Research and Extension Center Hampton Roads.
- Tentative plans for turf tour at Virginia Tech's Lane Stadium | lunch and fun afternoon at River Bend Nursery.

Recently, the VNLA Board of Directors approved funding to begin the long-awaited update to the VCH manual. Past president Christopher Brown, Jr. has stepped up to the plate to help spearhead this endeavor. Over the course of the next two years, the goal is to have a best-in-class horticulturist study manual.

As June, July and August roll in, I encourage everyone to reflect over the busy spring. Celebrate those things that went well and analyze areas that need improvement so that you can have a better busy season this fall. Constant evaluation of programs and practice will help to strengthen our businesses. Identify your biggest problem and drill down to find a solution. Hopefully this will help all of us to have a more productive fall.

I hope everyone enjoys the summer season and finds opportunities to relax a little. Don't forget to save-the-date for Field Day. More details to come...hope to see you there!

Chris Dowdy

VNLA President

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May 2023

Dear Industry Professional,

The Virginia Turfgrass Council (VTC) exists to support you, the people, companies, and organizations dedicated to Virginia's Green Industry. You have the unique privilege of earning a living restoring, protecting, and enhancing properties throughout Hampton Roads. Whether you design, install, and maintain landscapes and lawns; protect sensitive environmental areas; or advocate for our great industry, the VTC and the VTC Environmental Institute (VTC-EI) are at your service.

Our work ensures your rights and needs are protected. In addition to politely, and constantly, prodding Government Agencies that can influence your ability to do business or regularly connect with members of the General Assembly and other decision makers throughout the state.

We also provide classes and seminars that ensure your skills and required certifications are cutting edge and current. Please allow us to highlight two upcoming events designed to meet your needs. Additional details are on the enclosed flyers and online at www.vaturf.org.

June 22: Virginia Tech Turfgrass and Lawn Field Day

This annual event will be held in Virginia Beach at the Hampton Roads AREC. Come, learn from the experts, and receive pesticide recertification.

January 22 – 25: Come to the Bay Conference

The conference has grown each year and is now a major educational event that also provides excellent opportunities for certification and recertification. Like the Field Day, the Conference will be held in Virginia Beach at the Hampton Roads AREC.

Please consider becoming a member of the VTC and adding a small donation to the VTC-EI and take advantage of our newly implemented on-line recertification program for Certified Fertilizer Applicators. This program is free for our members. View these details or become a member at our web site www.vaturf.org.

Sincerely,



Phil Bailey, President



Wes Bray, Vice President



Tom Tracy, Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENT

Save the Date
VNLA FIELD DAY

WEDNESDAY EVENING
AUGUST 2, 2023
NETWORKING SOCIAL

Rising Silo Brewery
Blacksburg, VA



THURSDAY
AUGUST 3, 2023
FIELD DAY

Hahn Horticulture Garden
Blacksburg, VA



Updates from Virginia Tech's School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Educational Presentations, Hahn Horticulture Garden Tours, Legislative Updates, Exhibitors, Lunch and Interaction with Industry Colleagues

FRIDAY
AUGUST 4, 2023
TOURS AND RIVER FUN

Lane Stadium



Riverbend Nursery



More details and online registration coming soon.

Hotel room block details forthcoming with Field Day online registration.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES FROM AMERICANHORT

House Republicans Pass Debt Ceiling Package

By Sara Neagu-Reed

On April 26, with hardly a vote to spare, House Republicans passed legislation – H.R. 2811, the Limit, Save and Grow Act that would cut future spending in exchange for a limited debt ceiling increase. By a vote of 217 – 215, the bill advanced out of the House and now awaits consideration by the Senate. For context, earlier this year, Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen sent a letter to Congress notifying them that the federal government had reached its statutory debt limit and that the Department of the Treasury had begun taking “extraordinary measures” to avoid defaulting on its spending obligations. This is the first attempt by Congress to begin negotiations with the White House.

The Limit, Save and Grow Act would save \$4.8 trillion dollars over the next decade in exchange for a limited debt ceiling increase. The debt ceiling would be raised to the first of either March 31, 2024 or \$1.5 trillion in debt. The \$4.8 trillion comes from:

- Capping FY24 spending levels at FY22 levels (\$129 billion in immediate savings)
- Limiting future growth of spending to 1% annually (\$3.2 trillion savings over ten years)
- Clawing back unobligated COVID funds (\$29.5 billion in immediate savings)
- Defunding the expansion of the IRS (\$71.5 billion in immediate savings)
- Repealing federal spending on tax credits that were in the Inflation Reduction Act (\$569.5 billion in savings)

All eyes are now on the Senate. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) said the House version measure has no chance of moving through the Senate. But a few moderate Democrats have used the opportunity to urge Majority Leader Schumer and President Biden to engage with Speaker McCarthy. This pressure has led to a meeting scheduled for next week between the President and Speaker. •



Environmental Assessment Gives Green Light to Spotted Lanternfly Control

By Craig Regelbrugge

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has found that proposed activities to control spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) in the states of Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Rhode Island, will have no significant environmental consequences. Spotted lanternfly is an introduced invasive pest that has the potential to seriously harm agriculture and other resources. Details of the recent action can be viewed at <https://www.regulations.gov/document/APHIS-2023-0004-0006>. •



Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) Congressional Review Resolution Introduced

By Sara Neagu-Reed

Senators Tim Scott (R-SC) and Ted Budd (R-NC) and Representatives Ralph Norman (R-SC) and G.T. Thompson (R-PA) introduced a resolution of disapproval for the AEWR rule under the Congressional Review Act (CRA). If the CRA joint resolution of disapproval is passed by both Chambers of Congress and signed by President Biden, the AEWR final rule would go out of effect immediately.

The Republican-controlled House has demonstrated a greater willingness to use the Congressional Review Act (CRA) as a means of challenging rules they oppose. This was evident in their successful passage of a resolution opposing the Biden administration's Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule, which Biden later vetoed. Since CRA resolutions only require a simple majority in the House and Senate, filibustering is not a concern, increasing the chances of the resolution being presented to the President. This could be particularly significant as some rural Democrats may be inclined to support the resolution to address growers' concerns in their district, as was the case with the WOTUS rule.

We encourage all AmericanHort members to contact their Senators and Representative and express their support for the AEWR rule CRA resolution of disapproval. It will only take a few moments to send an email from this link: <http://takeaction.americanhort.org/landing-pages/aewrcrasolution> •

Florida Legislature Passes Immigration Enforcement Bill

By Craig Regelbrugge

On May 2, Florida's legislature passed a far-reaching immigration enforcement bill backed by Gov. Ron DeSantis. The bill, passed on a party-line vote, includes a range of provisions that are widely seen as political messaging; for instance, it would provide \$12 million for a “migrant relocation initiative” reminiscent of last year's relocation of South American migrants from Texas to Martha's Vineyard.

With respect to employment, the bill will mandate that businesses employing more than 25 employees must use the federal E-Verify program, with uncertain consequences. Three of Florida's “economic pillar” industries – agriculture, construction, and hospitality – rely heavily on immigrant labor, including workers lacking proper work authorization. The bill already passed the Florida Senate and is expected to be signed into law.

Craig Regelbrugge is Executive Vice President of Advocacy, Research, and Industry Relations at AmericanHort.



Evaluating Antidesiccants
as a Physical Barrier for

BOXWOOD BLIGHT MITIGATION

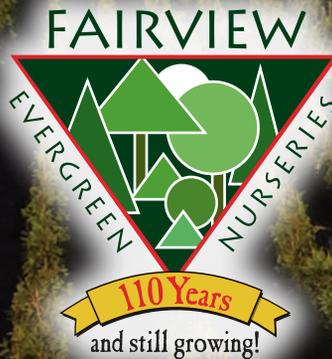
Under Controlled Environments

By Chuan Hong

Hampton Roads Agricultural Research
and Extension Center Virginia Tech,
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Boxwood blight caused by *Calonectria pseudonaviculata* is of increasing concern to everyone in the horticultural chain from grower to consumer. As the blight pathogen invades more production facilities and neighborhoods, its risk of spreading to nearby plantings and nurseries is mounting. Current approaches to this disease are eradication of symptomatic plant materials and chemical protection of healthy-looking boxwood shrubs. These approaches have several drawbacks. First, the blight pathogen will continue to produce spores and spread locally under favorable weather conditions. Second, there is a limited number of fungicides registered for this disease and they are surely expensive. Third, a weekly or biweekly treatment is required depending on the disease pressure, making it not affordable to maintain an effective fungicide program at production. Fourth, it is often impractical for public and private gardens to implement such fungicide programs as application visibility, pesticide drift, application frequency, and reentry intervals must be considered. Safer, more convenient and economically viable alternatives are urgently needed for management of boxwood blight. The objective of this study was to evaluate whether film-forming antidesiccant products can be used to protect boxwood crops from infection by the blight pathogen.

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Product	Active Ingredient	Label Rate (ml/L)	Proposed Interval (Day)	Manufacturer
Anti-Stress 2000	44% acrylic polymer latex	32	30-45	Polymer AG
AquaLock	30% proprietary polymeric surfactants	47	As Needed	Precision Lab
Moisture-Loc	Aqueous polymer, vinyl acetate, acetaldehyde	91	30	Zorro Technology
TransFilm	13.5% polymeric terpenes, 14.9% oxidized polyethylene	75	90-120	PBI / Gordon Corp
Vapor Gard	96% Di-1-p-Menthene (pinolene)	48	28-56	Miller Chemical
Wilt-Pruf	25% pinolene	150	60-120	Wilt-Pruf Products
Concert II	2.9% propiconazole, 38.5% chlorothalonil	2.5	21	Syngenta

This study was conducted with two-year-old Justin Brouwers boxwood in a containment facility with restricted access at the Hampton Roads Center. Six antidesiccant products labelled for boxwood or ornamental production, along with a fungicide standard – Concert II, were included in this study. These products were applied at their label rates onto boxwood plants one day before they were challenged with the blight pathogen. Also included in this study were a positive control in which plants were challenged with the blight pathogen without any pre-treatment with antidesiccant or fungicide standard, and a negative control in which plants were not pre-treated with any chemical nor challenged with the pathogen. Each plant was evaluated for boxwood blight 14 days after inoculation. This study was conducted four times with four replicate plants each time. Nine treatments were arranged in a randomized complete block design within each repeating study. Disease data of all four repeating studies were pooled to assess the control efficacy of individual products compared to nontreated controls. •

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Highlight on the

HAHN HORTICULTURE GARDEN AT VIRGINIA TECH

By Garden Director Scott Douglas, PLA

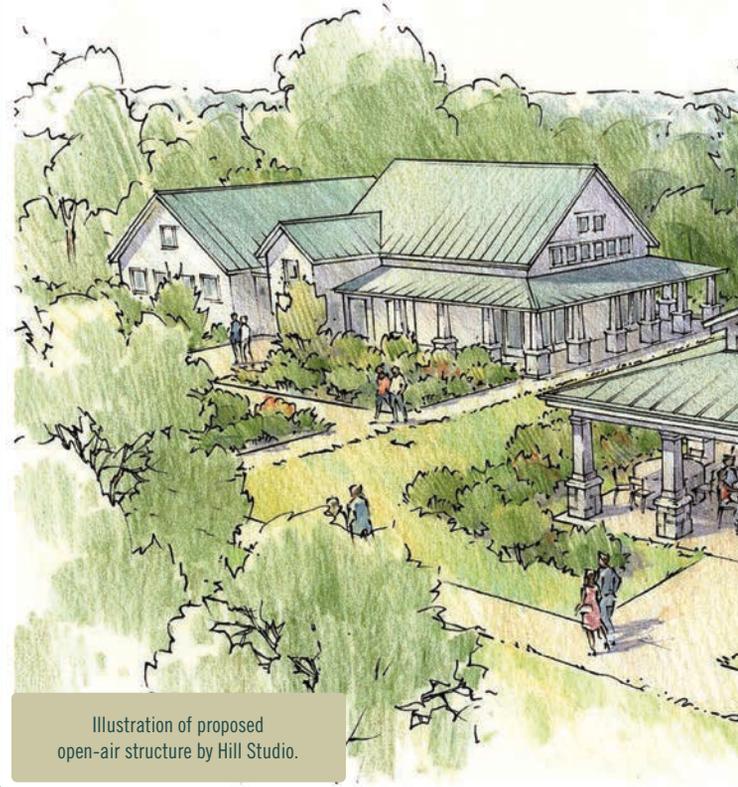


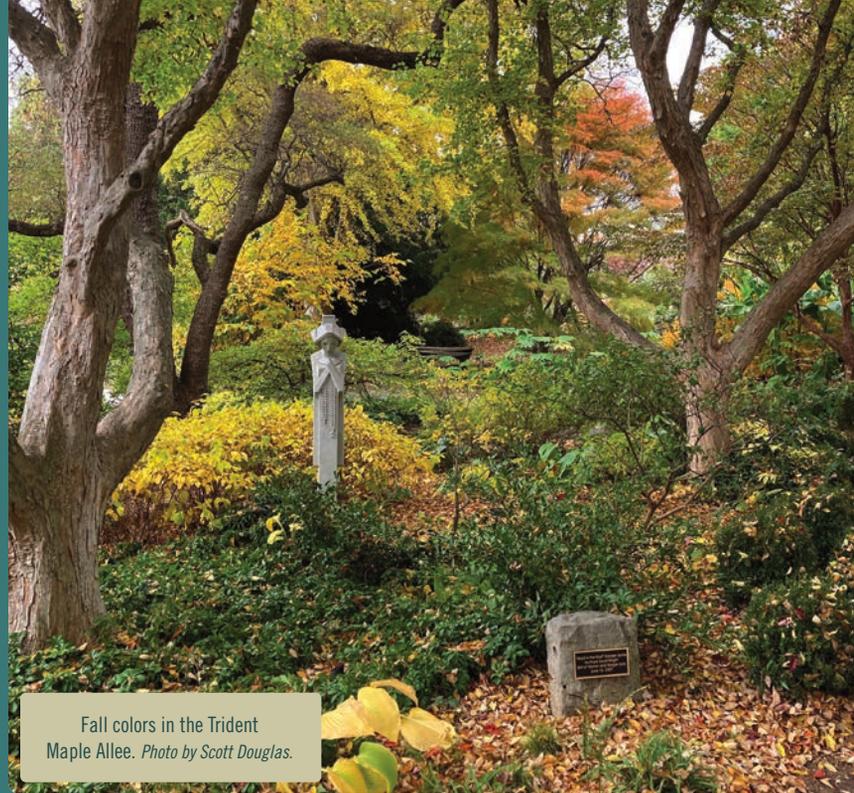
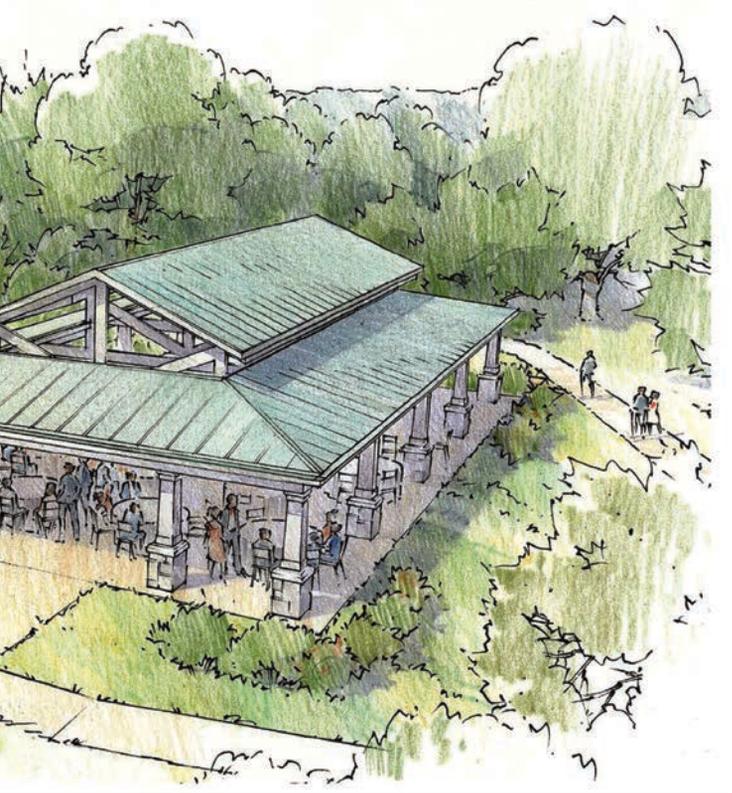
Illustration of proposed open-air structure by Hill Studio.

The Garden is a beautiful setting for yoga classes. *Photo by Scott Douglas.*



The Hahn Horticulture Garden is a six-acre teaching garden nestled on the outer edge of the Virginia Tech Campus in Blacksburg, VA. The Garden began in 1984 as a creative endeavor led by Horticulture Faculty members Robert Lyons, Robert McDuffie and Richard Johnson. Prior to becoming a horticulture garden, the area was used for trialing plants in long rectangular beds. Since the Garden's establishment, it has slowly grown into a thriving oasis that serves Virginia Tech and the surrounding community. The Garden is a part of the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences (SPES), which resides under the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs).

The Garden was officially named the Hahn Horticulture Garden in November 2004, in honor of Peggy Lee Hahn. Peggy and her husband Dr. T. Marshall Hahn, Jr. made numerous donations to the Garden, which fueled its expansion in the early 2000's. Dr. Hahn served as the president of Virginia Tech from 1962 to 1974 and became an executive with the Georgia-Pacific Corporation after leaving Virginia Tech. The Hahn's generosity had a significant impact on the garden, including the construction of the Peggy Lee Hahn Pavilion (2006) and Peggy's Meadow Garden (2008). Their daughters live in the Blacksburg area and continue to support the Garden via annual donations.



Fall colors in the Trident Maple Allee. Photo by Scott Douglas.



Summer 2022 interns Sarah, Emily and Makenzie installing new perennials at the wedding lawn. Photo by Scott Douglas.



Public Gardens Maintenance and Management students learned how to install sod by resodding the tent lawn. Photo by Scott Douglas.

The Garden is open 365 days per year from dawn to dusk and is visited by over 36,000 guests each year. The Garden features many themed spaces and plant collections for students and the general public to enjoy and learn about. The most popular space in the Garden is the Jane Andrews Memorial Stream Garden. Everyone enjoys watching the koi and goldfish swimming in the lower pond and visiting children jump at the opportunity to feed the fish, some of which will practically eat out of your hand. Peggy's Meadow is a collection of native and cultivars of native plants, arranged in a loose, random meadow like arrangement. A recently

completed seating area in the meadow provides a peaceful spot nestled amongst the tall grasses and perennials.

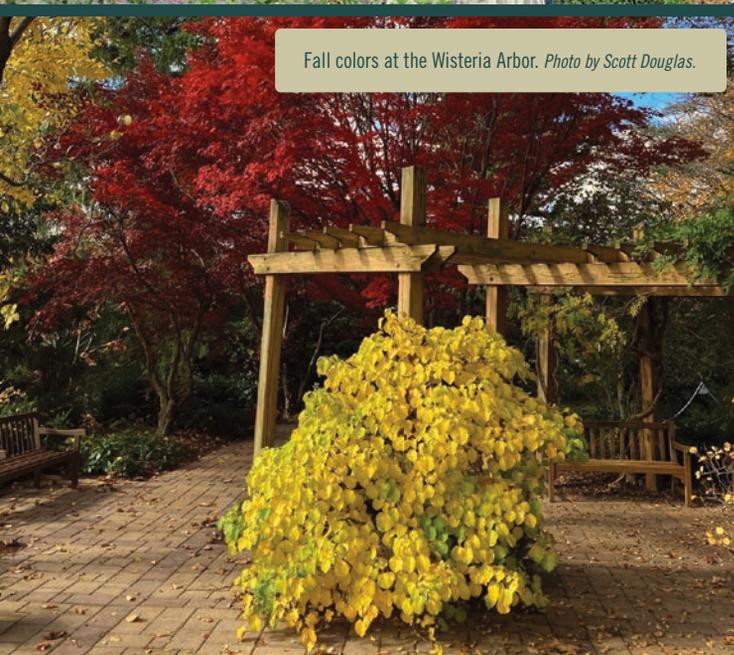
Annual beds along Washington Street feature spring and summer plantings and provide an exciting pop of color to campus. The Xeric Garden showcases a collection of plants that prefer dry, well drained soils and features multiple large agave plants that staff dig up each fall and protect in the greenhouse for the cold winter months. The Vegetable Garden highlights edible crops and shows visitors where their food actually comes from. The Garden partners with All-American Selections, who provides seed for their top selections from the previous three years.



Fall colors in the meadow garden. *Photo by Scott Douglas.*



The Garden is a beautiful location for wedding ceremonies. *Photo by Kailey Brienne Photography.*



Fall colors at the Wisteria Arbor. *Photo by Scott Douglas.*

A multitude of classes utilize the Garden as an outdoor teaching space, especially the perennial and woody plant identification classes. The Garden attempts to provide multiple examples of each plant, located in different sections of the Garden, one for the instructors to teach with and another to utilize for quizzes. This forces students to learn the plants and not their location in the Garden! Other classes that utilize the Garden regularly are art classes, entomology classes, poetry classes, and classes from the College of Natural Resources. The Garden features university Wi-Fi across a majority of the grounds, which allows students to enjoy the outdoor space while staying on top of their course work. On sunny days, many students can be seen on benches, blankets, or hanging in their hammock on the available hammock stands.

The Garden provides many hands-on learning opportunities for students including classes, jobs, and internships. Each semester, Garden staff lead Public Gardens Maintenance and Management, a Friday afternoon course that teaches gardening techniques while working in the Garden. During the summer, the Garden hires three to four interns who work 40 hours per week and get to experience all aspects of working in the Garden including general maintenance, special projects, leading tours and working with volunteers. The Garden also employs four to five students each semester, who work in the Garden with a focus on maintenance and event management. The Garden also has a great group of volunteers who work for two hours on Monday evenings. A group of 10-20 people can accomplish a lot of work in two hours!

Financially, the Garden operates as an independent entity within the University, basically as a small business under the university umbrella. SPES pays for the salaries of the Garden Director (whose appointment is 50% Garden/50% Teaching) and two full-time Horticulturists. Beyond that, it is up to the Garden to raise money to fund daily operations and improvements/expansion projects. The current fundraising goal for yearly operations of the Garden is around \$120,000.00 per year. The Garden accomplishes this through a variety of means, with rentals covering approximately 50% of that goal. The Garden is a popular location for weddings, parties, tailgates, memorial services and departmental meetings/retreats.

Additional funding comes from the yearly Garden Gala, which is held on the second Saturday in June (June 10th in 2023). This event raises money through sponsorships, silent auction items, and live auction items. It features live music, food and drinks and is a great way to celebrate the beginning of summer in Blacksburg. The Garden also sells memberships, which provides members with discounts to Garden events and free or reduced admission to over 300 Gardens across the country through the American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program.

All Gardens evolve over time, and the Garden Director has developed a long-range plan for future development and improvement of the Garden. The goal of this long-range plan is twofold, focusing on increasing the variety of landscape spaces within the Garden and to improve the Garden's ability to host rental events while also reducing the impact those events have on the Garden.

The plan includes several major additions, including:

1. An open-air pavilion structure to be built on the tent lawn, which will eliminate the need for tents and will make the Garden more marketable for rental events.
2. A glass house for tropical displays, orchid displays and seed starting demonstrations.
3. A formal garden featuring clipped boxwood hedges infilled with annuals and perennials.
4. Rearranging the existing Utility Line Arboretum (a collection of small trees that can be grown under utility lines) along a new pathway that will make the trees more accessible to visitors.
5. A Japanese-style Garden to add some international interest to the Garden and another space for students and visitors to relax in.

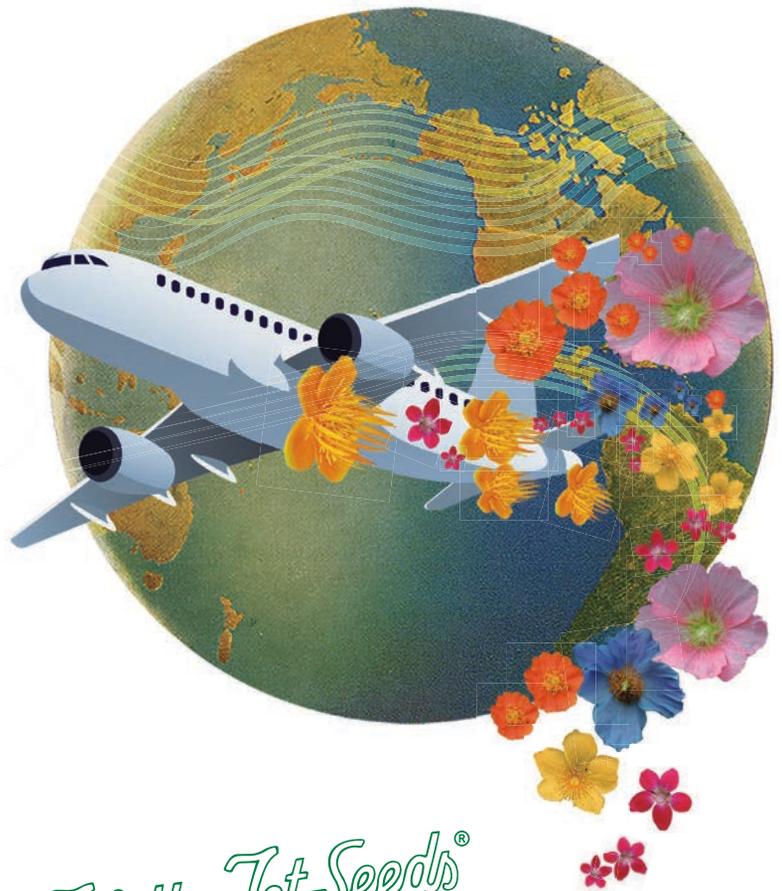
Since the Garden is self-funded, all of these expansions will need to be funded by donors and many of the improvements are great naming opportunities for donors or companies. The open-air pavilion is the top priority, and the Garden has already commissioned an architect to design the structure. The general design has cleared the Art and Architecture Review Board and the final design documents are in process as you read this. The ultimate goal is to break ground on this structure in November 2023 so that it is completed for wedding season 2024. If you are interested in sponsoring this project, or any of the other projects, please contact the Garden Director, Scott Douglas, via email at: dsd1@vt.edu.

2024 will mark the 40th anniversary of the Garden and the HHG staff are looking forward to honoring that milestone with a special Garden Gala and other events. Over those 40 years, the Garden has been impacted by countless staff members, directors, faculty members, students and volunteers and the staff want to celebrate all of their hard work and dedication.

Please visit the Garden website at hahngarden.vt.edu and sign up for our weekly email for updates on what is happening in the Garden. •

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SAVE THE DATE

**VNLA
FIELD DAY**

DATES

August 3 and 4, 2023

LOCATION

Hahn Horticulture Garden
at Virginia Tech

More details to come!

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