



President's Message

Dear Colleagues in Horticultural Therapy,

Welcome to the March 2024 newsletter of the American Horticultural Therapy Association! And so, Spring arrives! The vernal equinox depicts balance of the dark and light, the balance of personal and professional duties and the beginnings of celebrating the new growth surrounding us. AHTA has a reason to celebrate with its one-word resolution, GROWTH! We are honoring [National Horticultural Therapy Week March 17–23, 2024](#). I invite you all to celebrate with us through your programs that connect us to mother earth to foster the benefits, mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

GROW with AHTA. [Become a member](#) or encourage others to join, [join a work team](#), or [become a board of directors' member](#). Other ways you can help:

- Write an article for the [AHTA magazine](#)
- Connect to the AHTA social media
- Ask your facility/place of employment to become a sponsor
- Plan a webinar for our community
- Support our planning of our [2024 Annual Conference](#)
- Submit a research article for our [Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture](#)

Let us see Growth in AHTA! WE can do this collectively!

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

News and Events

Celebrating National Horticultural Therapy Week

Let's celebrate! [National Horticultural Therapy Week](#) is happening now, **March 17–23, 2024**. Each year, the American Horticultural Therapy Association

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. Take time to connect to local programs and bring recognition of horticultural therapy to all those you encounter this week! Let AHTA know of events that happen by sending them to info@ahita.org, or by posting and tagging AHTA on social media. Celebrate the passion that drives this profession! We encourage you to visit the [National Horticultural Therapy Week webpage](#) and watch the [Horticultural Therapy and AHTA video](#) to learn more.

Learn More



Save the Date for the AHTA 2024 Annual Conference

Collective Effervescence

October 18-19, 2024 | Raleigh, North Carolina

AHTA is pleased to bring you the [2024 Annual Conference](#) as an in-person, two day event. Please save the dates as we look forward to meeting together in the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina on **October 18–19, 2024**. The theme of the conference this year is **Collective Effervescence**. Registration is scheduled to open in early June! Pre-conference tours will be held on October 17, 2024. More information is coming soon.

Hotel rooms can now be booked at the [Embassy Suites by Hilton Raleigh-Durham Research Triangle](#) via the [reservation link](#) or by calling 1-800-EMBASSY and using the code 92G. The deadline to secure a room is **September 27, 2024**.

AHTA 2024 Request for Proposals

AHTA is now accepting proposed sessions and interactive workshops for the [2024 Annual Conference](#) in the following areas:

- Integrating climate change and biodiversity awareness into horticultural therapy (HT) / therapeutic horticulture (TH) practice.
- New and proven methods for therapeutic interventions across nature-based therapies.

- Introducing new techniques or modifying old ones as we adapt to stressors caused by change in many arenas; climate, areas of conflict, evolving perspectives, and use of technology, etc.
- Representing diversity among HT/TH practitioners and researchers.
- Collaboration and partnership models for resilience and long-term sustainability.

Presenters will be selected from proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposals by a peer review panel. Please [review the submission guidelines](#) and [submit your proposal](#) by **April 30, 2024**.

Notification of decisions will be sent by May 17, 2024.

[Learn More & Submit](#)

March Webinar: Panel Discussion

March 19, 2024 | 4:00 PM PT/7:00 PM ET

Last chance to [register for the March Webinar!](#) Celebrate Horticultural Therapy week as we focus on vocational, therapeutic, and social programs of three horticultural therapy practitioners:

- [Matthew Janson \(HTR\)](#) works in behavioral health and with veterans in hospice, long term care, and physical rehabilitation on a range of therapeutic issues integrating both recreation therapy and therapeutic horticulture.
- [Gary Altman \(HTR\)](#) facilitates green industry vocational skills training and supports employment programs for individuals with disabilities.
- [Hilda Krus \(HTR\)](#) oversees therapeutic horticulture programming in over 50 Supportive Housing facilities, Centers for Older Adults, the organization's Education Center at Riverbank State Park, with the NYC Department of Probation and the NYC Administration for Children's Services.

[Register Today](#)

Planting Seeds of Hope, Happiness, and Love: A Horticultural Therapy Seed Tape Activity

Excerpted from the AHTA Magazine, Vol 46, Issue 2, 2018

By Donna Soszynski

Thoughts of spring, it's time to think and get excited about what seeds to plant! This horticultural therapy session was at Ann's Place in Danbury, CT, where I

am an intern. Ann’s Place provides comfort, support, and resources to people living with cancer and their loved ones. The class was about how to make planting tiny seeds easier. It further explored how we can also “plant” seeds of positive thoughts. Each person was given a quote to read aloud. Many of the participants have had difficult times coping with their illness or treatment. This activity integrated elements that promoted positive and uplifting feelings and is a nice, low-cost activity with the added benefit that it continued outside the class.

Materials Needed:

- Toilet paper
- Scissors
- Colored paper
- Brightly colored table cloth
- Small cup
- Stick (i.e., popsicle stick) for mixing
- Small artist brush
- Water
- Markers
- Seeds (consider seeds that can grow easily together – lettuce, carrots, arugula, marigolds)
- Seed packet template (download from internet)
- Handout
- Plant labels (for when they plant the tapes)

Method:

1. Placed a colored piece of paper so the seeds could be easily seen, on a backdrop of colorful tablecloths to brighten up the table.
2. Give each participant the following: a. 11/2 ft of toilet paper, b. small cup to make the flour glue and a stick for mixing, c. flower and vegetable seeds.
3. Using a small amount of flour, add water, stirring until there's a glue-like consistency
4. Instruct the participants to fold their paper in half lengthwise, then open for placing seeds
5. Place a dot of glue every inch and half
6. Using the brush, pick up and place an alternate marigold seed with a carrot seed. (The flowers are very pretty mixed in between the carrots!)
7. Next instruct participants to cut out and assemble their own seed packet from a template design. These were labeled with either the seed name or inspirational thoughts like love, happiness, or hope.



Coming Soon, the Therapeutic Horticulture Practitioner!

The American Horticultural Therapy Association recognizes the practice of Therapeutic Horticulture is becoming a widely accepted and important component in healthcare, rehabilitation, residential programs, and community settings. The AHTA is pleased to announce a new professional credential – Therapeutic Horticulture Practitioner, THP!

The Therapeutic Horticulture Practitioner is intended for practitioners who provide services aligned with the [AHTA definition of therapeutic horticulture](#).

The AHTA will begin accepting applications for the THP starting **June 1, 2024**. Information about the THP including the eligibility criteria and application process will be in the upcoming AHTA Magazine, upcoming newsletters, and posted on the AHTA website very soon!

AHTA Annual Awards

AHTA is now accepting nominations for our [2024 Annual Awards](#). Please take time to consider those who are doing outstanding work in our field and [submit a nomination](#) for one of the following AHTA Annual Awards:

- Rhea McCandliss Professional Service Award
- Alice Burlingame Humanitarian Service Award
- John Walker Community Service Award
- Ann Lane Mavromatis Scholarship
- AHTA Therapeutic Garden Design Award

Nominations will be accepted until **April 1, 2024!**



Come Join Us!

Nominations for AHTA Board of Directors Now Open

AHTA is a member driven organization, and we need those with a passion in our field to help AHTA grow into the next 50 years! We value your expertise in marketing, social media, sponsorship and partnership development, magazine editing, webinar development, membership growth, conference planning, and exam development. Help shape the future of AHTA and the future of the profession by volunteering! The [nomination form](#) to serve on the AHTA Board of Directors is open now through **April 1, 2024**. Learn more about being on the board by reading our [Board Testimonials](#) and about the [nomination process](#) by watching the [video](#) above. Please disregard last year's deadline mentioned in the video.

[Learn More & Nominate](#)

Work Teams

AHTA would like to invite you to join one of our [work teams](#) to help in giving back to AHTA and receiving the benefits of being involved in helping AHTA move forward and connecting for the purpose of promoting horticultural therapy!

The AHTA Magazine Work Team, Conference Work Team, Credentialing Work Team, Marketing Work Team, Membership Work Team, Professional Education Work Team, Sponsorship Work Team, and Webinar Work Team invite you to share your expertise and support the growth of AHTA!

[Learn more](#) and send your interest to info@ahta.org!

Thank you and here's to a great 2024, another year of continued growth for all!

[Learn More](#)

Did You Know?

The Georgia Master Gardener Program was presented the House Resolution 955, which recognized their 45 years of service to the State of Georgia. The anniversary celebration will continue throughout 2024 with the gardens supported by the Master Gardeners having special tours. Hope Gardens, a 2023 AHTA Annual Award John Walker Community Service recipient, will be hosting an open garden on **June 8, 2024**. For more information, [contact Donna Hunt](#).

[Learn More](#)

Shout Out to Last Year's Conference Sponsors

AHTA would again like to acknowledge and express our gratitude for our [2023 Conference Sponsors](#)!

- [The University of Tennessee, Herbert College of Agriculture](#)
- [Wilmot Botanical Gardens at the College of Medicine, University of Florida](#)
- [Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences](#)
- [Horticultural Therapy Institute](#)

AHTA looks forward to your continuing collaboration. Sponsorship opportunities for the [2024 AHTA Conference](#) are coming soon!

Supporting AHTA

Your generous support makes it possible for our organization to grow and thrive. Your contributions help keep us going, including helping with the expenses of our annual conference, increasing our ability to work toward credentialing, offsetting the cost of our journal and other outreach publications, and connecting to colleges and universities, facilities, prisons, hospitals, and agencies that [support the profession of horticultural therapy](#).

[Ways to Support AHTA](#)

Become a Member

Not a member of AHTA? [Join today!](#) AHTA's membership is comprised of individuals who are passionate about the unique benefits of horticultural therapy as a therapeutic modality. Members are committed to the growth of the profession. Membership in the AHTA will keep you up to date on the latest in horticultural therapy news, as well as give you access to outstanding educational and networking opportunities.

Join Today



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