



## A Season of Gratitude & Giving – AHTA Update

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Dear Colleagues and Partners in Horticultural Therapy,

As we embrace this season of gratitude and giving, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation for each of you. Your dedication to horticultural therapy and to AHTA's mission has been inspirational. It's an honor to serve as president, and I am continually amazed by the passion and commitment you bring to this vital profession.

### **Reflecting on Our Progress**

Though it hasn't been long since the 2024 conference, there is so much to celebrate and be thankful for:

1. **Strategic Planning:** We're launching exciting initiatives to better serve you, including expanding our reach, growing our membership, and sharing the transformative power of horticultural therapy with the world.
2. **Welcoming New Leadership:** We extend our deepest thanks to our outgoing board members and warmly welcome our new leadership team. Their fresh ideas and perspectives will help propel AHTA into the future.
3. **Conference Success:** Our recent annual conference was a wonderful success, bringing together participants from across the globe for inspiring sessions, meaningful networking, and lively discussions. A special thanks to the conference team for their hard work in making it all possible!

### **Looking Ahead**

As we look to the year ahead, there are many exciting initiatives on the horizon:

1. **Membership Growth:** We're setting a goal to increase membership by 25% and ensure AHTA is represented in every state. Together, we can spread the word and invite others to join our community.
2. **Marketing & Sponsorship:** A new campaign focused on the whole-health benefits of horticultural therapy—especially for youth—will soon be launched. We'll also be kicking off a social media initiative to share the inspiring stories of our members and their work.

3. Virtual Conference & Webinars: Our next conference will be virtual, opening up opportunities for more of our community to participate. We'll continue to offer our monthly webinars, providing valuable learning experiences and a chance to stay connected.

### **A Time for Giving Back**

As we reflect on the many blessings of this year, I encourage you to think about how you can give back to AHTA in the months ahead. Whether by joining a work team—such as Sponsorship, Marketing, or Conference planning—you have the opportunity to help shape the future of our profession. Your involvement makes all the difference!

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to AHTA and the field of horticultural therapy. Together, we are nurturing growth, promoting well-being, and advancing the use of plants in therapeutic practice. I'm excited to continue working alongside all of you as we move forward into the next chapter of our journey.

Wishing you a season filled with reflection, gratitude, and inspiration!

Warmly,

**Matthew Janson HTR, CTRS**  
**President, AHTA**

## **News and Events**



### **AHTA 2024 Annual Awards Recap**

The 2024 AHTA Annual Awards were presented at the recent "Collective Effervescence" conference, celebrating collaboration in times of change. It was a privilege to lead the selection process for these outstanding recipients, who represent the best in horticultural therapy. Nominations for the 2025 awards will open in February—please consider nominating deserving candidates!

#### **Rhea McCandliss Professional Service Award**

*Awarded for significant contributions to horticultural therapy, including program development or innovative impact on the field.*

**Winner: Kirk W. Hines**

**Alice Burlingame Humanitarian Service Award**

*Awarded for exceptional voluntary contributions to horticultural therapy on a local, state, or national level.*

**Winner: MaryAnne McMillian**

**AHTA Therapeutic Garden Design Award**

*Awarded for excellence in therapeutic garden design and programming.*

**Winner: The Lerner Garden**

**Accepted by: Garron Dorr**

**Honorary Membership Award**

*Awarded for long-term service or outstanding contribution to the field of horticultural therapy.*

**Winner: Derrick Stowell**

Congratulations to all the winners for their incredible contributions to the field of horticultural therapy!

**Old & New Board of Directors**

On behalf of the American Horticultural Therapy Association, we want to extend our deepest thanks to our outgoing Board members for their dedicated service and unwavering commitment. Your leadership has truly helped our organization grow and flourish, and your contributions have been the roots of many of our successes. Like gardeners tending a plant, you've nurtured our mission, ensuring it continues to thrive and bloom for years to come.

R. Nicole Magor  
Sara Rodriguez LMTF  
Laura Rumpf HTR  
Charles Jordan CW4, MAS.  
Thank you for your excellent service to AHTA!

We also welcome new board members with the hope that with your new guidance, we'll continue to cultivate a strong community and promote the healing power of horticultural therapy.

Holly Harrison,  
Katie Ryzhikov HTR,  
Christina Kocol LPC, NCC, CGP,  
Kamyshia Thompson.  
Welcome to the garden!

We also welcome back Binxia Xue PhD, HTR and Rebecca Francis EdD, HTM. Thank you for your continued services!

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## HT Activity - Fun & Sustainable Fall Horticultural Therapy Activities

By Ciri Malamud, MA, HTR

Autumn is my favorite season – I love the colorful array of flowers and veggies in my gardens – all coming to fruition! This time of year is also wonderful for table top horticultural therapy activities outdoors in the lingering warm rays of sunshine. Here are some sustainable projects perfect for your clients of all abilities, using materials and resources readily at hand in the garden:

1. Repurpose your Jack-o-Lanterns by cutting them in half and using the back half as a planter. Fill them with potting soil to ½” from lip, and plant with a selection of your favorite succulents (zones 9-10). Or, thin your Rudbeckia bed (zones 6-8), and transplant in another part of your garden. Voila! a perennial niche in your garden with naturally amended soil.

2. Again, with mini-pumpkins (or gourds), create a hanging bird feeder by cutting one-third of the top off, and scrape out seeds. Run a bamboo skewer for each pumpkin through opposite sides 1” from lip, and fill with pumpkin (sunflower, etc.) seeds. Next, tie one end of a 2’ length hemp string to outside of skewer end, pass over a branch or tree limb, and tie off to other end on the opposite side of the skewer. Snacks for migrating birds or overwintering avian residents (all zones)!

Excerpted from AHTA Magazine, Volume 50, No 3, 2022



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### Announcing the THP, 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 that the new professional credential - **Therapeutic Horticulture Practitioner, THP** - is now available for applications! The Therapeutic Horticulture Practitioner is intended for practitioners who provide services aligned with the AHTA definition of therapeutic horticulture. Visit the **THP webpage** to find out more information regarding eligibility and the process of applying.

[Learn More](#)

## Webinars That May Be Popping Up In 2025

As the year draws to a close, we're taking a moment to rest, recharge, and plan for what's coming in 2025. While there is no December webinar, exciting developments are underway for the new year, and we're thrilled to share a sneak peek with you!

### **A Partnership in Bloom with Thrive UK**

In 2025, we are looking forward to partnering with Thrive UK, an organization dedicated to the transformative power of horticulture. Together, we're exploring the potential for two enriching webinars focused on horticultural therapy, mental health, and the therapeutic power of nature. Stay tuned as we finalize these plans!

### **Horticultural Insights from Extension Specialists**

Next year, we'll also be welcoming two Extension specialists who bring expertise in critical areas of horticulture:

- **Phenology:** Discover the science of plant and animal life cycles and how environmental changes influence their timing. Our expert will dive into how phenology plays a vital role in gardening, landscaping, and farming.
- **Indoor Lighting for Plant Growth:** Indoor gardeners, this one's for you! Learn from an Extension specialist about the best lighting practices for healthy, thriving indoor plants, from seedlings to full-grown foliage.

### **Exploring the Benefits of Horticultural Therapy (HT) on Youth**

We have three upcoming topics focused on the positive impact of horticultural therapy on young audiences. This innovative approach uses plants and gardening to support physical, emotional, and developmental growth, and we are gathering more details on these sessions. Expect valuable insights and inspiring stories to emerge.

### **And...Two More Openings!**

With a full schedule already shaping up, we still have two slots open for more topics in 2025. Whether you're interested in advanced gardening techniques, eco-friendly practices, or any other aspect of horticulture, there may be something new on the horizon. More updates will follow as we continue shaping the year ahead.

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## Work Teams

The Sponsorship work team, in coordination with other AHTA work teams, is spearheading a youth campaign for 2025,

**“Growing Impact: Advancing Youth Wellness Through Horticulture.”**

This campaign will be a coordinated effort, nationwide, merging the therapeutic power of plants with leading wellness practices, serving as a powerful catalyst for promoting holistic health in youth. We are currently bringing together thought leaders to help shape the direction of the campaign, as well as AHTA members routinely working with youth who would be open to hosting a campaign feature site next summer. To learn more, please email [sponsorship@ahta.org](mailto:sponsorship@ahta.org). We welcome opportunities to talk with and learn from you as we shape the direction of this campaign!

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! Please consider joining a work team to activate your passion and creativity! Consider writing and editing for the AHTA magazine, planning and implementing the annual conference, sharing your creative ways to market AHTA, helping our membership grow, increasing our partners and sponsors, building our webinar library and more. Please check out all the work teams, share your expertise, and support the growth of AHTA! [Learn more](#) and send your interest to [info@ahta.org](mailto:info@ahta.org).

Learn More

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### Survey: What Should AHTA do to Make Membership More Valuable to you?

If your not a member, we would love your feedback on how to make membership more appealing and valuable to you. Please take a minute and let us know your thoughts in our very brief [survey](#).

TWO QUESTION SURVEY

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### AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture

The AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture had been approved for the Open Access Model and is now available on Google Scholar. Did you know that you can access the copies of the AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture by going to Google Scholar, putting in the “AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture” in the search window and to narrow down your search add the volume number from the AHTA list of Journal. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

While considering publishing in the AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture consider that as members of AHTA there is no charge for the Article Processing Charge (APC) while nonmembers pay \$300. Another great way to become a member! Hoping to see more submissions that will go out to all!

## 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](#). Our [2024 Partnership Guide](#) is now available!

In keeping with the forward growth of AHTA, we have redesigned our [2024 Partnership Guide](#) to include new “à la carte” sponsorship opportunities! These options can be selected independently of AHTA sponsorship packages or added to enhance them. The goal is to offer sponsors greater flexibility in shaping their partnership opportunities to better align with their specific needs and objectives, resulting in a more tailored and impactful collaboration. [Sign up to become a sponsor](#) today! Your support fuels our mission to continue advancing the development of horticultural therapy and making an impact nationally and worldwide.

[Ways to Support AHTA](#)

[View 2024 Partnership Guide](#)

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## AHTA HTR Database Search Option

AHTA HTR Database Search Option AHTA has a Horticultural Therapist-Registered (HTR) Directory feature on our website. This feature allows companies or the general public to search for HTRs near them. The benefits for HTRs may include employment, consultation work, presentation/information sharing opportunities, advocacy for the profession of horticultural therapy and more! Any HTR member has the opportunity to opt-in or opt-out of the database. We request that HTR members update their profile with this indication. To update: 1. Log into the Member Center 2. Select "My Profile" 3. Select "Edit Profile" 4. Check "Opt-in" or "Opt-out" We would like to use this as a reminder for all members to refresh their profiles with any other updates as well.

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## 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.

**Did you know?** AHTA members benefits include free webinars and free article processing fees for the AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture! Another two new reasons to join!

Join Today



**American Horticultural Therapy Association**

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