

## AHS 2017 Great American Gardeners National Award Winners



**T**HE American Horticultural Society (AHS) is proud to announce the recipients of the Society's 2017 Great American Gardeners Awards. These individuals, organizations, and businesses have contributed significantly to fields such as plant research, garden communication, landscape design, youth gardening, teaching, and commercial horticulture. This year we introduce a new award to recognize an emerging horticultural professional. The awards will be presented June 8 during a ceremony and banquet at River Farm, the AHS's headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. For more information, or to register to attend the ceremony, visit [www.absgardening.org/awards](http://www.absgardening.org/awards) or call (703) 768-5700.

**T**HE 2017 Liberty Hyde Bailey Award is presented to **William A. McNamara**, who has devoted his career to discovering, researching, protecting, and promoting plants in North America and abroad. His lifelong interest was first piqued as a teenager, after learning about the adventures and discoveries of 19th-century plant hunters. After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley in 1975 with an English degree, McNamara got a chance to have his own international adventures.

### LIBERTY HYDE BAILEY AWARD

*Given to an individual who has made significant lifetime contributions to at least three of the following horticultural fields: teaching, research, communications, plant exploration, administration, art, business, and leadership.* Named after Liberty Hyde Bailey (1858–1954), horticulturist, educator, author. First awarded in 1958.

He spent nearly a year visiting gardens and botanizing in remote natural areas around the globe. But it was the flora of Asia that most captivated him, and he has returned to that continent almost annually ever since for plant-hunting expeditions.

After that first trip, McNamara settled in Sonoma, California, where he established Con Mara Gardens, a residential landscape contracting business that he successfully ran for 16 years. In 1987, he became an assistant director at Quarryhill Botanical Garden, a private research garden in Glen Ellen, California, that specializes in displaying plants from temperate East Asia. McNamara rose through the ranks, becoming director in 1994, and today he is its executive director and president. McNamara also returned to school to earn a Masters degree in conservation biology at Sonoma State University in 2005.

McNamara's wide-ranging professional affiliations include serving as vice president of the Western United States region of the International Dendrology Society and as an international ad-



visor for *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*, published by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He is also a field associate of the Department of Botany at the California Academy of Sciences. In addition to sharing his horticultural knowledge through frequent presentations throughout the country, he regularly contributes to scientific journals, plant society publications, and other periodicals.

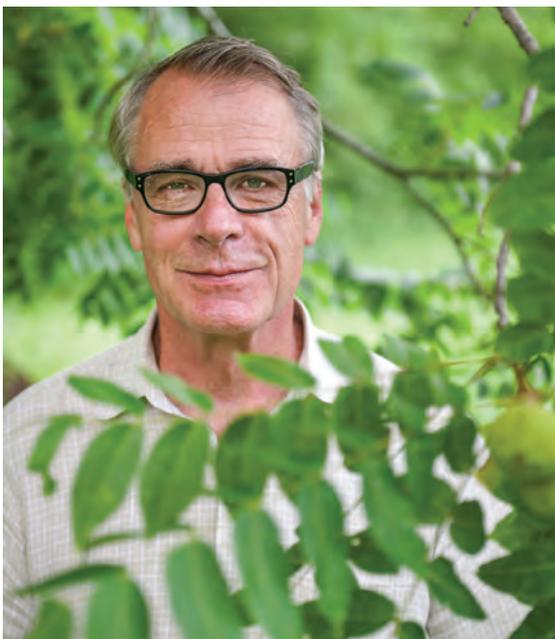
In recognition of his many achievements in horticulture and plant conservation, McNamara has received the Garden Club of America's Eloise Payne Luquer Medal, the Scott Medal and Award from the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, the National Garden Clubs Award of Excellence, and the Veitch Memorial Medal from the Royal Horticultural Society.



### EMERGING HORTICULTURAL PROFESSIONAL AWARD

*Given in the early stages of an individual's career, this award recognizes significant achievements and/or leadership that have advanced the field of horticulture in America. First given in 2017.*

**Brienne Gluvna Arthur** is a horticulturist, landscape design consultant, and garden communicator based in Raleigh, North Carolina. She serves as the foodscaping and landscape design correspondent for the PBS show "Growing a Greener World" and her first book, *The Foodscape Revolution*, was released this spring. In an effort to get younger horticulturists better connected with their peers in the field, she helped found the Facebook forum, "Emergent: A Group for Growing Professionals," and serves as a member of the AmericanHort NextGen committee. She currently serves as a national director of the Association for Garden Communicators for the Southeastern United States and sits on the Executive Committee for the International Plant Propagators Society, Southern Region.



### PAUL ECKE JR. COMMERCIAL AWARD

*Given to an individual or company whose commitment to the highest standards of excellence in the field of commercial horticulture contributes to the betterment of gardening practices everywhere. Named for Paul Ecke Jr. (1925–2002), innovator, facilitator, businessman. Formerly known as the Commercial Award, it was first awarded in 1971.*

**Allen Bush** has played an influential role in introducing and helping to popularize perennial plants in the United States since 1980, when he opened Holbrook Farm and Nursery in Fletcher, North Carolina. That pioneering mail-order nursery served as a source of rare and unusual perennials and other plants for 15 years. In 1995, Bush helped establish the North American office of Jelitto Perennial Seeds in Louisville, Kentucky. He has served as this innovative German company's director of special projects since then, working with domestic seed producers and searching for new varieties around the world. In 2002, the Royal Horticultural Society recognized his *Heuchera* introduction, 'Molly Bush', with an Award of Garden Merit. Bush received the Perennial Plant Association's Award of Merit in 2011.

### LANDSCAPE DESIGN AWARD

*Given to an individual whose work has demonstrated and promoted the value of sound horticultural practices in the field of landscape architecture. First given in 1974.*

**Melissa "Missy" Marshall** has dedicated more than 30 years to public landscape design, working on projects at more than 50 botanical institutions in 28 states. After spending two decades



with the firm Environmental Planning and Design, she co-founded her own firm, which was recently renamed Pashek+MTR. Her projects have been recognized with awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects and the American Public Gardens Association (APGA). She received the Award of Merit from the APGA for distinction in her work. In 2013,

she was inducted into the Council of Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the American Horticultural Society and assisted the organization with the creation of a master plan for its 25-acre River Farm headquarters.

### LUTHER BURBANK AWARD

*Recognizes extraordinary achievement in the field of plant breeding. Named for Luther Burbank (1849–1926), legendary American plant breeder. First awarded in 1993.*

**Thomas G. Ranney** is the JC Raulston Distinguished Professor of Horticultural Science at North Carolina State University. He heads the research program at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center in Mills River, North Carolina. His work there has encompassed a broad array of



landscape plants, such as dogwoods, flowering cherries, magnolias, and viburnums, resulting in the develop of numerous improved cultivars. His breeding efforts also have focused on creating seedless cultivars of barberry, Japanese silver grass, and other popular but aggressive ornamental plants. Ranney speaks internationally and serves in leadership roles for several academic and profession-

al organizations including the American Society for Horticultural Science. He has received dozens of awards, including the H. Marc Cathey Award for excellence in horticultural research from the American Horticultural Society in 2008.

### MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

*Recognizes a past Board member or friend of the American Horticultural Society for outstanding service in support of the Society's goals, mission, and activities. First awarded in 1980.*

**Vivian Boley** has been a dedicated volunteer at the American Horticultural Society's River Farm headquarters for 20 years.

During this time, she has enthusiastically lent a hand wherever it was needed and inspired many other volunteers with her passion for gardening. At River Farm, she has spent untold hours weeding, planting, pruning, and doing myriad other gardening tasks, as well as helping to package seeds and fill orders for the annual AHS members-only Seed Exchange. A gardener at home as well, she particularly loves hostas, which she often divides and shares with fellow volunteers.



### B.Y. MORRISON COMMUNICATION AWARD

*Recognizes effective and inspirational communication—through print, radio, television, and/or online media—that advances public interest and participation in horticulture. Named for Benjamin Yoe Morrison (1891–1966), landscape architect, plant breeder, artist. Formerly known as the Horticultural Communication Award, it was first awarded in 1987. In 2005, this award merged with the Horticultural Writing Award, which debuted in 1953.*

**Tom Fischer** got his start in publishing as a manuscript editor for the University of Chicago Press. Next he became a managing editor at Beacon Press in Boston, Massachusetts; it was there that



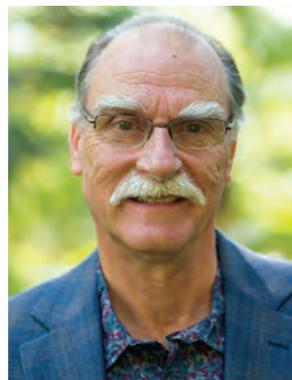
he got into gardening after renovating the courtyard garden at the Beacon offices. Beginning in 1990, he spent 14 years on the editorial staff of *Horticulture* magazine, first as senior editor and then as general editor. He then moved on to Timber Press in Portland, Oregon, where he is the senior acquisitions editor. In this role, he has focused on bringing the most inspiring and environmentally responsible gardening books to the reading public. His first book, *Perennial*

*Companions: 100 Dazzling Plant Combinations for Every Season*, was published by Timber Press in 2009. He followed up with a second book, *The Gardener's Color Palette*, in 2010.

### PROFESSIONAL AWARD

*Given to a public garden administrator whose achievements during the course of his or her career have cultivated widespread interest in horticulture. First awarded in 1953.*

**Julian Duval** is president and CEO of the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas, California. Over his 20-year tenure there,



he has led its transformation from a struggling county-run garden with depleted financial reserves into the successful nonprofit organization it is today. This has included enhancing its educational programs and creating the largest children's garden on the West Coast. Prior to this position, he helped establish the Indianapolis Zoo at a new location, where he championed efforts to make the zoo's three-acre garden an accredited botanical garden.

In the process, he became a pioneer in advocating for the growing role of zoos in conservation and horticulture. Duval received the Horticulturist of the Year Award from the San Diego Horticultural Society in 2014.

## JANE L. TAYLOR AWARD

*Given to an individual, organization, or program that has inspired and nurtured future horticulturists through efforts in children's and youth gardening. Named for Jane L. Taylor, youth advocate, horticulturist, educator. First awarded in 2000.*

**Lee Coykendall** is the children's education specialist at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C., where she has been introducing kids to the importance and wonder of the plant world for 20 years. Her infectious passion for plants infuses the innovative lessons she designs and teaches to children of all ages. She also conducts professional development programs for teachers to help them engage their students in plant-based learning. One of Coykendall's creations is HOPS (Hands On Plant Science), an immersive environmental science program she launched 10 years ago as a resource for underserved youth in the Washington, D.C., community and their teachers.



## TEACHING AWARD

*Given to an individual whose ability to share his or her horticultural knowledge with others has contributed to a better public understanding of the plant world and its important influence on society. First awarded in 1953.*

**Johanna Roman** has worked on international agricultural issues for Texas A&M University and AgriLife Research for most of her 25-year professional career. Her many achievements include creation of agricultural development projects in Latin America that have benefited thousands of small-scale farmers, women, and children. She has led numerous horticulture and nutrition training programs for kids in Central America. She also has served as a mentor and advisor to student and development organizations in Latin America and Africa



working to improve horticultural techniques and food production programs. In her current role as program manager for the nonprofit Conflict and Development Foundation, based in College Station, Texas, she works with student teams to create innovative solutions to problems farmers face. She also coordinates research on agricultural issues affecting rural women and youth.

## Nominations for 2018

Help us give recognition to deserving "horticultural heroes" by nominating someone you know for one of the 2018 Great American Gardeners Awards. For more information, visit [www.ahsgardening.org/awards](http://www.ahsgardening.org/awards).

## URBAN BEAUTIFICATION AWARD

*Given to an individual, institution, or company for significant contributions to urban horticulture and the beautification of American cities. First awarded in 1985.*

Founded in 2007, the **Philadelphia Orchard Project (POP)** in Pennsylvania promotes sustainable, equitable, and ethical food systems. The nonprofit organization works with community groups



to design, build, and maintain orchards in neighborhoods where residents lack access to fresh fruit. Community organizations own, sustain, and harvest the orchards, which utilize and beautify neglected space. POP has helped plan and plant community orchards at 41 locations to date and currently supports 56 orchard sites throughout Philadelphia. A recently developed harvest program provides a way for the community orchardists to donate excess produce to local food banks.