

# Arbor Friends

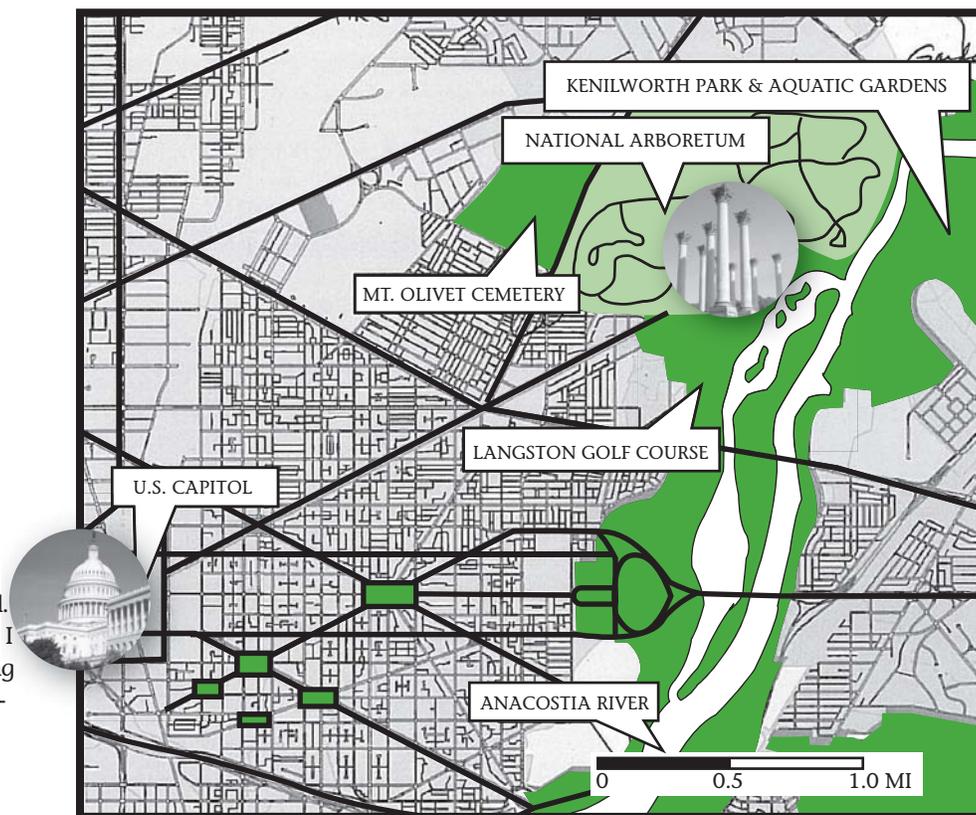
## The Arboretum: The City's Green Refuge

By Dove Coggeshall

**O**n a recent Saturday in July, we were headed down Bladensburg Road. From inside the cool car, I could sense the sweltering heat and humidity from the sun reflecting off the concrete road. But immediately upon turning onto R Street—heading for the Arboretum gates—I could feel myself relax. Having just passed through the bustling urban New York Avenue corridor, we were greeted with a calm and welcoming oasis of green—the Arboretum.

A recent snippet from the Weekend section of the *Washington Post* listed the Arboretum as one of the District's most serene and tranquil spaces. The Arboretum is indeed filled with quiet places for strolling among the conifers and azaleas or meandering along the Flowering Tree Walk.

When you survey Washington, D.C., from the air, your eye is drawn to the greenspaces, some of which are close to the Arboretum—Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens just across the Anacostia River, Langston Golf Course, and Mount Olivet Cemetery. This set of contiguous green places,  
*see page 3*



## Green Philanthropy— Money Well Invested

By Jane Herbert, FONA Director of Development

**“G**reen” philanthropy is a major new thrust for those who invest in nonprofits. Many corporations now contribute to climate change and environmental awareness efforts. FONA is lucky to have as its mission the call to provide support for 446 acres of magnificent greenspace just two miles from the Capitol in downtown Washington, D.C. That mission gives FONA the ability to provide corporations, foundations, and individuals the opportunity to lead by example

in protecting, preserving, and promoting the Arboretum and, in a larger sense, the increasingly fragile environment of our planet.

One particular corporate partner has a long-standing commitment to the environment and is a world leader in green philanthropy. As an international corporation, HSBC has committed \$100 million over five years to help reduce the impact of climate change on the world's rivers, forests, and cities. HSBC's Climate  
*see page 3*

## KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

(letters are best if faxed)

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Phone: 202-224-5444 • Fax: 202-224-9787

Senator Robert Bennett,

*Ranking Member*

Phone: 202-224-5444 • Fax: 202-228-1168

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Senator Robert Byrd, *Chair*

Phone: 202-224-3954 • Fax: 202-228-0002

Senator Thad Cochran, *Ranking Member*

Phone: 202-224-5054 • Fax: 202-224-9450

### House Appropriations

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Rep. Jack Kingston, *Ranking Member*

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(District of Columbia)

Phone: 202-225-8050 • Fax: 202-225-3002

### Department of Agriculture

Secretary Ed Schafer

1400 Independence Ave. SW

Washington, D.C. 20250

Phone: 202-720-3631 • Fax: 202-720-2166

## A note from the Executive Director

You will notice that this newsletter is focused on many wonderful "Green" topics related to the Arboretum. But the letter from FONA Chair Jeanne Connelly points to the financial difficulties facing the Arboretum. What is the connection between these two issues?

The Arboretum is both a real place and a national symbol. The

## From the Chair of the Board

*Dear Friend of the National Arboretum:*

In our last issue, we informed you about the incredibly short-sighted decision contained in the President's proposed budget to cut \$2 million from the Gardens Unit and the Education and Visitors Services Unit at the National Arboretum. These are the only two departments at the Arboretum that reach out and provide services to the general public. With a total budget of \$5 million for these services (and almost \$2 million of that amount going to overhead), this budget cut would have devastating consequences such as the possibility of weekend closures, curtailment of the Youth Garden, abandonment of outlying gardens, closure of part of the Bonsai Museum, and elimination of classes.

Since that time, there has been an outpouring of support for restoring these cuts, and many individuals and organizations have contacted members of Congress to voice their objections. For all of you who have contacted Congress to express your concern, thank you! All of us at FONA and the Arboretum are most appreciative.

And your outreach is making a difference. Recently, the House Appropriations Subcommittee responsible for the Arboretum decided to restore the proposed cuts. While this is only a first step in the appropriations process (the bill must still go to the full House Committee, the Senate Subcommittee, the full Senate Committee, and then to the full House and Senate), it is a very hopeful sign. However, we must remain vigilant. If you have not yet communicated to Congress, please consider

reality of the Arboretum is that, as a large swath of green in a dense urban area, it is a living contributor to the environmental well-being of the Nation's capital. At the same time it is a powerful symbol of the questions that confront our country

contacting those members listed to the left who will play an important role as the appropriations bill for the Arboretum wends its way through the legislative process.

Of greater concern, however, is that the battle over this budget cut proposal is masking the overwhelming need of the Arboretum for an infusion of new funds—static funding over the years has led to a deterioration of facilities, postponed maintenance, and failure to even begin to implement a wonderful Master Plan for the Arboretum developed almost a decade ago.

First on the agenda for implementing the Master Plan is to construct a new entrance to the Arboretum on Bladensburg Road. This has been in the planning stages for several years, and the District of Columbia has done its part by putting in the turning lanes, curb cuts, and traffic signals, but the Department of Agriculture has yet to provide a single penny to start this important improvement.

With your help, FONA continues to provide much needed financial assistance to the Arboretum, but it often seems like we are merely plugging a hole in an ever weakening dike. Please let Congress and the Department of Agriculture know that they need to invest in this national treasure if we are to maintain an incredible 446-acre greenspace in our bustling urban capital. Thank you again for all that you do.

Jeanne Connelly  
Chair, FONA Board of Directors

as it addresses the challenges to our environment.

As both a vibrant reality and a striking symbol, the Arboretum deserves your support.

Kathy Horan

## Green Refuge

from page 1

anchored by the Arboretum, could be considered the backyard of the Capitol—an urban forest just two miles from the heart of the city. The



... That's why this green issue of the newsletter is 100% tree-friendly. Forest Stewardship Council-certified, the paper you are holding is partially made of postconsumer recycled paper. The remainder of the paper comes from managed forests that are sustainable, that minimize pollution and habitat destruction, and that are managed with respect for the communities and wildlife surrounding the forests. The paper is processed without chlorine, and this newsletter is printed with soy-based inks rather than the traditional petroleum-based ones. For further information about the Forest Stewardship Council, go to: [www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org).



Arboretum is central to this green network, and yet it is an underused, unknown gem.

According to Casey Trees, the Arboretum has 67% of the total tree canopy in Ward 5. This greenspace is a critical component of plans to revitalize this part of the District. In fact, urban renewal in this area is already in progress. The Arboretum with its abundance of trees not only helps improve the city's air quality but will also help bring more visitors to this national treasure and will provide a much needed refuge for urban dwellers.

Just a short walk from the visitor's center is a small forest of crape-myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) currently under development. This species will add to the more than 650 woody

and herbaceous plants already released by the Arboretum research facilities during its 80-year history. The work, mostly conducted by staff right on the grounds, provides home gardeners with carefully bred and selected plant varieties that will do well in urban areas. Fact sheets and plant guides that will help you find just the right variety for your location are available at <http://www.usna.usda.gov>.

Not only does the Arboretum offer more than 400 acres of greenspace to the city, it also serves as a setting to showcase important plant research and as a place for visitors to learn about their natural environment and discover the perfect place to relax in the sweltering heat of a Washington summer.

## Green Philanthropy

from page 1

Partnership seeks to protect rivers and the livelihoods of people who rely on them, support research on the long-term effects of climate change on the world's forests, and help create cleaner and greener cities.

HSBC Bank USA, N.A., and HSBC Bank's foundation, HSBC in the Community (USA) Inc., have both made major gifts to FONA in the past two years. In addition to supporting the Great Arboretum Cookout each year, the bank made a contribution of \$90,000 in 2007 to the new Flowering Tree Walk, which connects the inner core of the Arboretum's collections with a beautiful walking path through a myriad of flowering trees with year-round visual appeal.

Most recently, HSBC in the Community (USA) Inc. contributed \$150,000 to begin restoration of the long-neglected Hickey Run, the heavily polluted stream that flows through the Arboretum grounds directly into the Anacostia River.

Installation is set to begin in the fall of 2008 for a state-of-the-art system to collect floatable trash and liquid pollutants from the storm drains in Northeast D.C. that flow into Hickey Run. Once the flow of pollutants is stopped, HSBC funds will be used to begin the process of cleanup and restoration of the stream.

Executive Vice President of Government Relations/HSBC North America and FONA board member J. Denis O'Toole said, "I am privileged to work for such an environmentally conscious company and thrilled to serve my community by volunteering with FONA." O'Toole serves on the Strategic Planning and Finance Committees of the Board of Directors.

In the world of green philanthropy, HSBC is a stellar example of a corporation that invests its money where it can have the greatest impact. With a shared vision of being exceptional stewards of the environment, FONA is proud to work with such a wonderful partner.



## FONA Membership Goes Green!

On Tuesday, May 13, FONA hosted more than 125 green-minded folks in an evening embracing all things eco-conscious on the terrace of the main building. While enjoying organic vegetarian snacks and organic beer, wine, and fruit juice spritzers, those in attendance were able to experience the Arboretum's true "greenness." Passengers on two full trams toured the expansive and diverse grounds, while those who stayed behind were able to explore the Herb Garden, walk up to the Capitol Columns, or simply mingle while enjoying the Koi

Pond. For most in attendance, this was a first visit to the Arboretum; nevertheless, the group's passion for raising awareness and support for the Arboretum was overwhelming. The event was a collaborative effort with Green Drinks D.C.—a social networking group for people involved and interested in the Green World—and it was a total success, adding 20 new and enthusiastic FONA members, raising more than \$1,000, and spurring excitement and admiration for the Arboretum. To learn more about Green Drinks, visit: [greendrinks.org](http://greendrinks.org).

## Washington Youth Garden

### *Congratulations!*

The Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington is pleased to announce that the Washington Youth Garden at the U.S. National Arboretum has been chosen by reviewers for the 2008 Catalogue. Selected from a field of 250

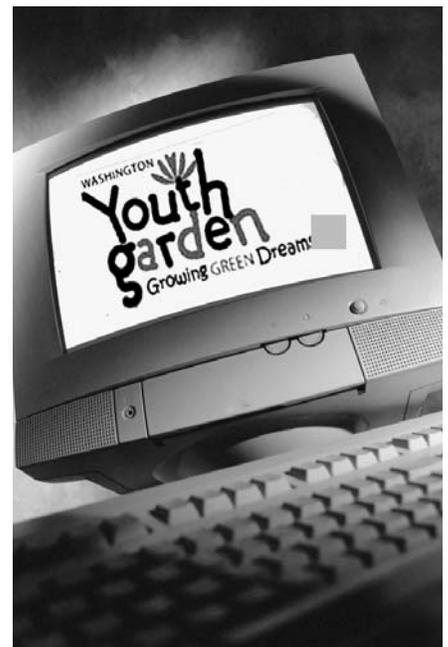
organizations, the Washington Youth Garden has been called "one of the best small charities in the Washington D.C. Region."

Visit the Washington Youth Garden online at [catalogueforphilanthropy-d.c..org](http://catalogueforphilanthropy-d.c..org)

## Washington Youth Garden Launches New Website

Check out the new website for the Washington Youth Garden!

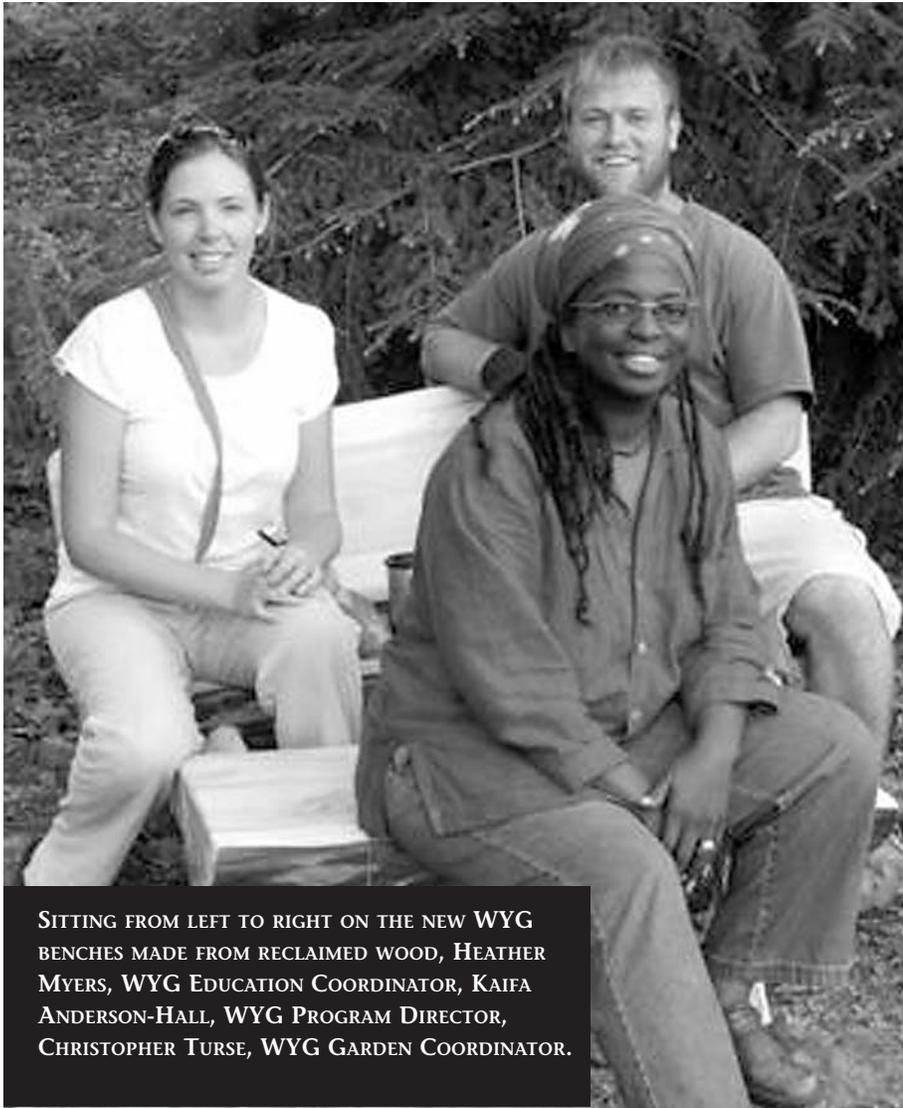
[www.washingtonyouthgarden.org](http://www.washingtonyouthgarden.org), launched at the end of July, includes up-to-date information on programs, events, and even what's growing in the garden. Learn more about how to get involved, visit the photo gallery, and then come on out and join us in the garden!



I remember hearing President Bush mention "switchgrass" in a speech some time ago. At the time I thought, What is switchgrass? Now I know! Come and see switchgrass, castor beans, sugarcane, and 18 other crops that can provide us with the raw materials to convert plant energy into fuel that are on display in a thought-provoking exhibit recently opened at the Arboretum. The 21 power plants all mature at different times; the majority of them are in their prime from mid-summer through early fall. Bring your school-aged children to play a game of plant exploration designed just for them. The exhibit is located next to the Herb Garden and brochures are available in the Administration Building.

Nature Explore Classroom

# Growing New Opportunities for Children and Families



SITTING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ON THE NEW WYG BENCHES MADE FROM RECLAIMED WOOD, HEATHER MYERS, WYG EDUCATION COORDINATOR, KAIFA ANDERSON-HALL, WYG PROGRAM DIRECTOR, CHRISTOPHER TURSE, WYG GARDEN COORDINATOR.

*By Kaifa Anderson-Hall, Washington Youth Garden Program Director*

Coming to the Arboretum at the Washington Youth Garden (WYG) this summer is an exciting new area for children and families—the Nature Explore Classroom—which will increase children’s opportunities to connect with

the outdoors through the use of natural materials in creative, unstructured play. “Classroom” areas will be devoted to nature art, building materials, messy materials, climbing and crawling, and music and movement, ensuring a well-rounded mix of experiences for all children. The spaces

will be accentuated by native plants and reclaimed wood from the Arboretum and other sites within the metropolitan area.

Conceived by The Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, the Nature Explore Classroom was designed as a direct response to “nature deficit disorder,” defined as a growing lack of engagement and interaction between children and nature. Working in collaboration with the District of Columbia’s Urban Forestry Administration, The Arbor Day Foundation is committed to bringing this kind of experience to elementary schools, early education programs, parks, and other community sites throughout the city. “We believe that the stimulating natural beauty of the Arboretum, located in the nation’s capital, and the drama of nature that unfolds in the Washington Youth Garden make for an ideal site for a Nature Explore Classroom,” said John Rosenow, president of The Arbor Day Foundation. “We appreciate the Arboretum’s support of the Nature Explore program.”

Serving as a model for innovative teaching and learning about nature education, the Nature Explore Classroom at the Arboretum will be an extension of the natural outdoor educational experience that the WYG has provided children and their families for more than 35 years. We anticipate growing many new opportunities with the Nature Explore Classroom. Stay tuned to the WYG’s website (see WYG Launches New Website, page 4) for next month’s scheduled opening.

## Student Conservation Association

### The Student Conservation Association at the Washington Youth Garden

For two weeks this summer, six high school students from the Washington area brought their youthful energy to the Washington Youth Garden as part of The Student Conservation Association (SCA) D.C. Summer Conservation Crew program. This incredible group of young people had the opportunity to experience something that many of their peers never get to experience: working on an environmental restoration project. They had three goals: to free native species by removing invasives (e.g., Japanese honeysuckle, Oriental bitter-sweet, porcelain berry, Japanese knotweed, and English ivy), to restore and reinvigorate the natural ecosystem surrounding the Youth Garden, and to create a woodland path on the back perimeter of the garden. As part of their educational experience, the group visited many of the Arboretum's varied collections and gardens. Under the wonderful leadership of John Panting, the work of these young people exceeded all expectations. "As a first-time experience for all of them as well as not knowing each other prior to this assignment, it was wonderful to watch how the group grew as a team over the two weeks to accomplish their goals," said John. Several of the crew members said that this kind of work was something they would look forward to doing again. The WYG says "Thank you for a job well done!"



LEFT TO RIGHT: JOHN PANTING (23), CREW LEADER; SHIRLEY PARK (17), J.E.B. STUART HIGH SCHOOL; JAMES POTTS III (16), BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL; MICHELLE JOHNSON (16); DELANE GALLOWAY (16), FRIENDLY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL; CHRISTOPHER LEGRANE (17), FAIRMONT HEIGHTS; PHILLIP HINES (16), EASTERN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

### Another Thank You To SCA

The Summer Conservation Crew was not the first gift that the WYG received from SCA. On April 25, a contingent of 50 SCA college students from all over the country provided a marathon service day of bed preparation, planting, weeding, and path restoration. "Despite having to work in heavy soil condi-

tions due to extensive rain, three days of work was accomplished in one day," says Christopher Turse, WYG Garden Coordinator and service day supervisor. Their passionate commitment to the environment was evident and they truly met the challenge of their motto: "Act Now and Act Well."



# The Anacostia— The Arboretum's Riverfront

By Bill Matuszeski, FONA Board Member

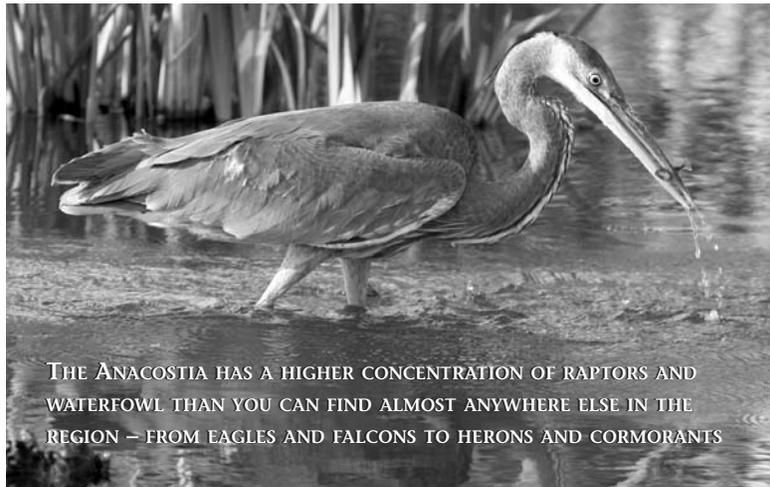
The Arboretum is beginning to discover its waterfront. Last year, a floating dock at the foot of the Asian Gardens was installed to give boaters access to the Arboretum. Now there are many kayaks and canoes tied up there as people visit the grounds.

Still, the Anacostia is a true river of contrasts. An early morning boat trip reveals a place that looks and feels like a remote bayou. But after a storm the smell of pollution and the sight of floating trash overpowers that beauty. The river is one of three toxic hot spots in the Chesapeake Bay watershed (the others are Baltimore Harbor and the Elizabeth River in Norfolk). Yet it also has a higher concentration of raptors and waterfowl than you can find almost anywhere else in the region – from eagles and falcons to herons and cormorants.

The problems that plague the Anacostia are well known, and there are efforts underway to deal with them. One problem is pathogens, the bacteria that enter the water from human sewage. This type of pollution is the result of runoff from rainstorms in the District and some of the older suburbs. The sewer system that handles the runoff from these areas was designed a century ago to use stormwater to clean out the sewage and send it directly into the river without treatment. Now the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority has a \$1.2 billion program to deal with

this, primarily by building enormous underground storage tanks to hold stormwater until the treatment plants can handle it. The second problem is the proliferation of old and failing sanitary sewers in Montgomery and Prince Georges counties which were built as separate from the storm sewers and laid along streams of the Anacostia. Now ero-

(PAHs) in Hickey Run. This creek enters and passes through the middle of the Arboretum after draining a number of bus and rail yards and other industrial areas on the other side of New York Avenue. For some time, the Agricultural Research Service has had the money to fund a cleanup. Now there is a cooperative effort with D.C. Government and the U.S.



THE ANACOSTIA HAS A HIGHER CONCENTRATION OF RAPTORS AND WATERFOWL THAN YOU CAN FIND ALMOST ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE REGION – FROM EAGLES AND FALCONS TO HERONS AND CORMORANTS

sion has caused them to crack and break open. After citizens brought lawsuits, the WSSC with Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) agreed to replace these by rebuilding or relocating as needed.

Next let's consider toxins. The U.S. Navy Yard has been declared a Superfund site primarily because of the decades of toxic chemicals discharged into the river from industrial activities long ago phased out. These toxins are still present in the water but the Navy has not yet addressed this issue. Perhaps, with all the recent attention focused on the river, they will take action.

Even more relevant to the Arboretum is the oil, grease, and highly toxic polyaromatic hydrocarbons

Environmental Protection Agency to build a facility just inside the Arboretum to remove the oil, grease, and other toxins as well as trash. While the approval process for the project has been slow, there is hope for a shovel in the ground this year.

Finally there is the problem of trash, which enters the streams and outfalls into the Anacostia after every storm of any note. The trash consists mainly of

cans, bottles, and styrofoam containers, which are picked up along the streets by stormwater and sent into storm sewers that empty into tributary streams and the river. Once in the river, the debris moves back and forth with the tide until cleaned up by the U.S. Corps of Engineers skimmer vessels or by volunteer citizen cleanups along the shorelines. The solutions to this problem are public education and recycling controls.

Yes, there are problems, but we are on the brink of solving them. Come to the Arboretum's river and you will see birds that you have never seen before and you will feel that you have been transported to a most remote marsh. All of this is yours in the center of the city.



Photos by www.eventphotosd.c...com



## A Night to Remember— The Great Arboretum Cookout of 2008

**T**he 2008 Great Arboretum Cookout on June 3 was definitely a night to remember. A record number of people (almost 700) turned out to enjoy a splendid dinner in support of our own Arboretum. The Herb Garden was in full bloom as guests took in the magnificent colors over cocktails and enjoyed exploring the Bonsai & Penjing Museum. No one could have anticipated that the evening would be spent under a tent in the beautiful meadow below the Capitol Columns because of a cloudburst! Guests who availed themselves of the early-evening tram tour were lucky to enjoy the full beauty of the grounds, because sadly, the after-dinner tour was rained out. But the rain did not dampen spirits of those assembled. Many a guest commented that the thunderstorm made the evening even more extraordinary and brought

a special playfulness to the festivities.

FONA was pleased to celebrate the State of Michigan this year and wants especially to thank the honorary co-chairs of the event—Debbie Dingell, Gayle Kildee, Sandie Knollenberg, and Amey Upton—as well as the full congressional delegation for its support. The many corporate and individual sponsors made this a very special night for FONA as we continue to move forward with our mission to raise awareness and funds for the Arboretum. If you missed the cookout, please make plans now to attend next year on June 9, 2009, when we celebrate the State of Maryland.



*Debbie Bowles, Dinner Chair & Jeanne Connelly, Chairman of the Board, on behalf of the board of directors of the Friends of the National Arboretum, wish to thank...*

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*This evening would not be possible without the gifted and energetic staff of the U.S. National Arboretum, thank you!*

# “Doing What’s Right with What’s Left”

**Kathy Horan, Executive Director**

**L**os Angeles designer Rose Tourjé for years designed new spaces and selected new furniture for large, national corporate clients. Not much thought was given to the fate of the old furniture, carpeting, and ceiling tiles. Then in the spring of 2005, she saw furniture being tossed out a fifth-story window of a high-rise building.

Something clicked! She realized suddenly how wasteful it was not to attempt to “repurpose” furniture for others to use or, at the very least, recycle it. ANEW (Asset Network for Education Worldwide) was the answer. She launched the nonprofit organization, and her motto and call to action is “doing what’s right with what’s left.”

Now she collects, organizes, and redirects surplus furniture, fixtures, and equipment for donation to the underserved and those who support them.

Thanks to ANEW, FONA was the lucky recipient of repurposed office furniture with a new purpose. We hope you will visit us and see our “new” desks, chairs, and cabinets. Everything matches, functions, and looks great.

A very simple idea now makes an impact on offices across the coun-



“New” FONA OFFICE FURNITURE

try, and it builds social capital and well-being in the communities it serves while sparing our environment. Please visit the ANEW website and learn more about this wonderful organization: [www.anewfound.org](http://www.anewfound.org)

# Garden Fair 2008

## Another Smashing Success

*We thank our donors, our volunteers... and our shoppers!*

All photos by Glenda Kapsalis





## GARDEN FAIR SPONSORS

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- US Botanic Garden
- Virginia Berry Farms

Mark Your Calendars now for April 24 & 25, 2009

## Used Books

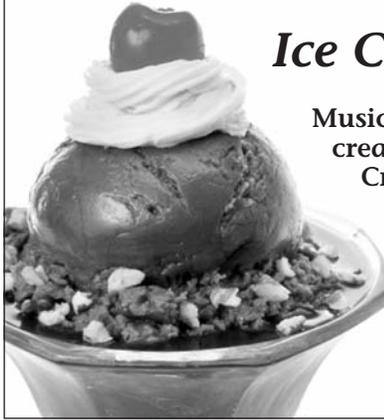
**T**hank you to the donors who stocked our book and container shelves for the April Garden Fair. Your generosity made us more successful than ever!

We continue to sell used garden books throughout the year. Stop by the office and browse. We also continue to accept donations. You can call for a pickup or drop off your donations at the FONA office, 202-544-8733.



# Save the Date!

## Ice Cream Social



Music & children's activities & lots of free ice cream ... The Washington Youth Garden's Ice Cream Social

Join us for a fun-filled celebration of the Youth Garden on Saturday, September 13, from 12 pm – 3 pm!

*Free and open to all ages.*

## Combined Federal Campaign

Are you a federal civilian, postal, or military employee or retiree?

**Designate the Friends of the National Arboretum #81610 through your payroll deduction now!**

Help us preserve this glorious greenspace, located in the heart of Washington, D.C..

*Visit the U.S. National Arboretum today!*

Articles, photos, and questions regarding *Arbor Friends* should be sent to the FONA office: [khoran@fona.org](mailto:khoran@fona.org)

[www.fona.org](http://www.fona.org)

202-544-8733

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