

The
View
FROM

高深園
HIGH FALLS GARDENS

Dear Friends of High Falls Gardens,

INSIDE

Page 3
Student Gardens:
How You can Participate

Page 4
Aristolochia Controversy
Heats Up

Page 5
Messenger on 51st Street

Page 6
Cornell Examines Attitudes
Toward Genetic Engineering,
Gives Grade of "Incomplete"


The transition to a new millennium being difficult, this is the first newsletter since last July. (*Good excuse, but I can't use it again.*) Nevertheless, there's positive news to report beyond mere evidence of our continued survival.

It was a jungle out there during the 2000 season! So much rain that we didn't use our new sprinkler system even once. We learned the hard way what our local farmers have been saying, that once you have a good irrigation system in place the dry, sunny years are better and easier than the wet years. Alas, those lovely garden nooks sometimes felt like the Little Shop of Horrors. The weeds, the weeds!

Overgrowth and fungi made the plants look exhausted on HFG Field Day, September 16th. But perhaps this appearance was only in the critical eye of the intimate weeder who knows the plants' private parts. To the three dozen visitors, all was lush and sparkling in the sunshine. We pitched our yellow and white tent in the garden and family and friends made a party.

The new bees from Champlain Valley did very well over the summer and by frost-time had filled three supers with brood and comb. With those stores, and the formic acid treatment to remove Varroa mites, the bees were prepared for winter as best we novices know how. The autumn frosts were early and hard but were greeted with great sighs of relief, especially after snows blanketed the garden.

Around noon on February 10th, a brief window of thaw and sunshine, we watched the hive as several dozen workers flew out and lobbed poops on us and the surrounding snow. (They eat their honey stores all winter to keep themselves alive and to generate warmth around the queen. But they need temperatures of 50° F or above to come outside to defecate.) That was the High Falls Gardens version of Groundhog Day, and the bees' survival was cause for rejoicing.

Those cheers have turned to groans as March has come and we're still shoveling. The good news is that the snow cover has been constant this winter, protecting those plants. And, no doubt, the weeds. 

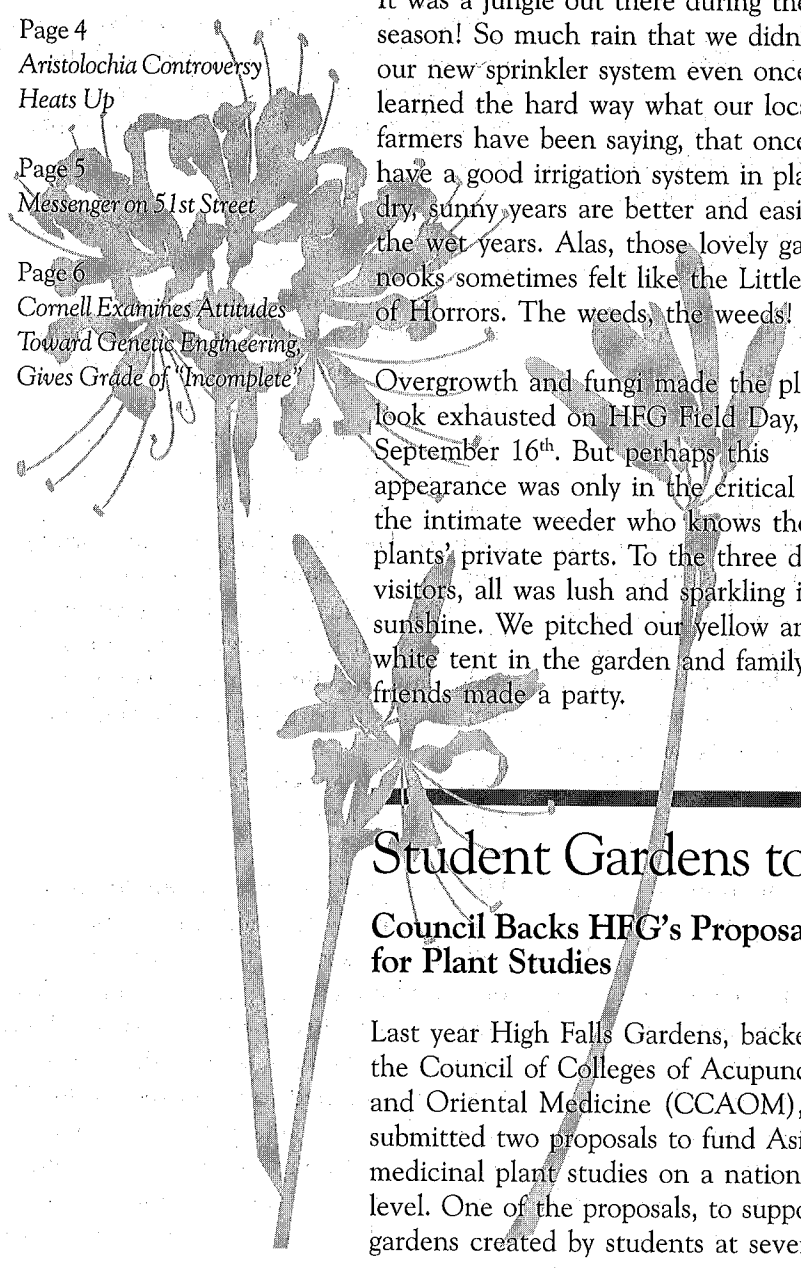
Student Gardens to Bloom Throughout Nation

Council Backs HFG's Proposals for Plant Studies

Last year High Falls Gardens, backed by the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CCAOM), submitted two proposals to fund Asian medicinal plant studies on a national level. One of the proposals, to support gardens created by students at several of

the CCAOM member colleges, was funded for 2001 by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. The award includes eight \$1500 stipends for student garden programs and the development of a website to share horticultural information related to Asian medicinal plant studies:

The second proposal was submitted to the
(continued on page 2)



The View FROM HIGH FALLS GARDENS

P.O. Box 125
Philmont, NY 12565 USA

Jean Giblette, *Publisher*

HFG ADVISORY BOARD

Alice Lee Chun, M.A., R.N.

Briarwood, NY

Lyle E. Craker, Ph.D.

*University of Massachusetts
at Amherst*

James A. (Jim) Duke, Ph.D.

Fulton, MD

Andrew Ellis

Berkeley, CA

Steve Gilman

Ruckytucks Farm, Stillwater, NY

Edith Lee, R.Ph., L.Ac., M.T.O.M.

New York, NY

Robert Newman, L.Ac., M.S.T.C.M.

Sherman Oaks, CA

Jeffrey C. Yuen

*The Swedish Institute,
New York, NY*

© 2001 High Falls Gardens/
Jean Giblette. All rights reserved.
The View is a newsletter published three times per year for the Friends of High Falls Gardens, an association of people who are interested in learning about Chinese medicinal botanicals for their own edification. Neither High Falls Gardens nor the Publisher prescribes medicine in any way, but rather encourages all readers and members to seek the advice of licensed medical practitioners. The membership/subscription price is \$15 per year.

For further information contact
High Falls Gardens,
P.O. Box 125,
Philmont, NY 12565 USA
phone 518-672-7365
or email hfg@capital.net.

STUDENT GARDENS

(continued from page 1)

U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is a plan for a nationwide trials program, to be carried out by the colleges in cooperation with local farmers, universities and extension services. Just recently, funding was declined for 2001, but HFG and allies expect to resubmit a stronger proposal next year.

Those interested in eventual domestic production of the Asian medicinal plants welcome these initiatives as important steps toward development of the market.

A Solid Base for Research

In the past year, HFG's work has been joined by a number of new colleagues. We are seeing the contours of an emerging continent-wide effort to grow and understand the Asian medicinal plants.

Our first research project, a three-year trial program for six species of Chinese medicinal herbs, was completed at the end of 2000. This pioneering set of field trials was carried out in collaboration with Dr. Lyle E. Craker of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and funded in part by Northeast SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education), a U.S. Department of Agriculture program. Replicates of the test plants were sited at HFG's Hillview Farm field and at three other participating farms in New England. Reports on these trials will be published later this year.

While these data are important — as are the results of central New York's (CADE's) Medicinal Plant Project and the Minnesota Medicinal Herb Network's cultivation project — our ambition is to be able to compare outcomes across a wide variety of climate zones. While comparisons are done informally among growers, formal plant trials require simultaneous planting of identical material in fixed amounts and arrangements, to help

insure that variations in results are due to climate and soil conditions only.

To compete for research funding, especially against the predominant interest in (some would say "obsession with") biochemistry and genetics, is a mighty challenge. Yet the world is changing rapidly, and many helpers are at hand. The past few years have seen substantial development of the practice of traditional Oriental medicine in North America. The Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (A&OM) professional organizations are strong, the accredited colleges have established a doctoral curriculum, the number of colleges has grown in a short time to over forty — and they are located in every region of the U.S. Where would we find a better network to sponsor Asian medicinal plant research?

The colleges of A&OM need not reinvent the wheel. Each has the necessary resources nearby, which include universities, botanical gardens, the extension service and, last but not least, ecologically conscious, experienced farmers. The model for this cooperative arrangement already exists in Minnesota and Sonoma County, California, as detailed in past issues of *The View*. Now, if similar arrangements can be established in Florida, Texas/New Mexico, the Northwest and Hawaii, we'll have locales spanning a wide range of climate zones. Funds are being sought, participation is welcome.

Prospects for Medicinal Plant Production

HFG has worked with farmers for years. They are ready for medicinal plants and will plant as soon as the markets are organized enough to pay a fair price for a clean, top-quality, locally grown product. Many savvy farmers who produce clean food have learned to avoid the worldwide commodities markets and to seek out direct market connections. As a result, direct-marketed herb cooperatives are being developed in California, Minnesota,