



CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

Media Contact:

Melissa Schuler
(847) 835-6829, direct
mschuler@chicagobotanic.org

For Immediate Release

**Chicago Botanic Garden's Lenhardt Library Awarded
National Endowment for the Humanities Grant**

Supporting the digitization and preservation of 45 rare botanical volumes

GLENCOE, Ill. (November 16 2011) – The Chicago Botanic Garden's Lenhardt Library was recently awarded a \$172,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to fund a project that will digitize and preserve 45 rare and unique botanical volumes, dating from the late sixteenth to the early twentieth century, which will be made publicly accessible via the Illinois Digital Archives. This project will enhance access to a unique cultural treasure by contributing rare volumes of educational value and public interest to the nation's collection of digital works in the humanities.

Previously housed in the basement of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society (MHS), these rare books were subjected to a 1996 flood and kept there in unfavorable conditions due to insufficient staff and funding. This collection of books and journals encompasses five centuries of research on botany, gardening and landscape design. In 2002 the Chicago Botanic Garden purchased these rare books and journals ensuring the heart of this historic collection will remain together and preserving the cultural history and literature of its discipline.

“These volumes present an outstanding opportunity for researchers and students to map the history of ideas as well as chart the evolution of the modern science of botany, and discover the relationships between science and art, botany and medicine, and humans and nature,” said Leora Siegel, Director of the Lenhardt Library.

The Woman's Board of the Chicago Horticultural Society established the Lenhardt Library in 1951. In 1959 it contained 584 volumes. With the opening of the

Chicago Botanic Garden and its Education Center in 1976, the Library's growing collection of 6,000 books moved to a new facility to better meet the needs of its users.

Today the collections of the Library hold approximately 110,500 volumes in 32,500 book & periodical titles. This includes 2,800 periodicals, 3,300 rare books, 750 DVDs and videos, 10,000 slides, 1,000 nursery catalogs, and the archives of the Chicago Horticultural Society.

The Lenhardt Library is located in the Regenstein Center. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, and by appointment; closed on holidays. Members have borrowing privileges.

Admission to the Chicago Botanic Garden is free. Select event fees apply. Parking is \$20 per car; free for Garden members. For more information and to search the library collections, visit www.chicagobotanic.org/library.

Interact with the Garden for this and other Garden events and programs:

- Blog: <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/grow>
- E-news: <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/enews>
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/chicagobotanicgarden>
- Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/chicagobotanicgarden>
- RSS: <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/feeds.php>
- Strategic Plan: <http://strategicplan.chicagobotanic.org/>
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/chicagobotanic>
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/chicagobotanicgarden>

###

Editors, please note: The Chicago Botanic Garden's newsroom is online at www.chicagobotanic.org/pr. For digital images, contact Melissa Schuler at (847) 835-6829 or at mschuler@chicagobotanic.org.

The Chicago Botanic Garden, one of the treasures of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, is a 385-acre living plant museum featuring 24 distinct display gardens and four natural areas. With events, programs and activities for all ages, the Garden is open every day of the year. Admission is free; select event fees apply. Parking is \$20 per car; free for Garden members. Located at 1000 Lake Cook Road in Glencoe, Ill., the Garden is smoke free. Visit www.chicagobotanic.org, or call (847) 835-5440 for seasonal hours, images of the Garden and commuter transportation information.

The Chicago Botanic Garden is managed by the Chicago Horticultural Society. It opened to the public in 1972 and is home to the Joseph Regenstein, Jr. School of the Chicago Botanic Garden, offering a broad array of adult classes in plant science, landscape design and gardening arts. Through the Division of Plant Science and Conservation, Garden scientists work on plant conservation, research and environmental initiatives that have global impact. The Center for Teaching and Learning brings the wonder of nature and plants to children, teens and teachers. The Garden's Horticultural Therapy and Community Gardening programs provide nationally recognized community outreach and service programs. A program of the Chicago Botanic Garden, Windy City Harvest is an organic vegetable and plant production enterprise that provides instruction in sustainable horticulture and urban agriculture to residents of Chicago's North Lawndale and West Side neighborhoods.

The Chicago Botanic Garden is accredited by the American Association of Museums and is a member of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA). The Chicago Botanic Garden is also host to Botanic Gardens Conservation International-U.S., and a member of the Center for Plant Conservation. In 2006, the Chicago Botanic Garden received the Award for Garden Excellence, given yearly by the APGA and Horticulture magazine to a public garden that exemplifies the highest standards of horticultural practices and has shown a commitment to supporting and demonstrating best gardening practices.