

N.C.'s first Horticulture Therapy class completed at WPCC

The first Introduction to Horticulture Therapy class in the entire state of North Carolina has been completed at Western Piedmont Community College. The course is part of WPCC's Horticulture Technology Program.

The mission of horticulture therapy is to add quality of life to people who are physically, socially, medically, and emotionally challenged. Institutions such as the Broughton Hospital and the Western Carolina Center have a horticulture therapy department which works with the residents. Up until this point, there has been no formal training specifically for a career in horticulture therapy as persons with various degree backgrounds were hired and trained on the job.

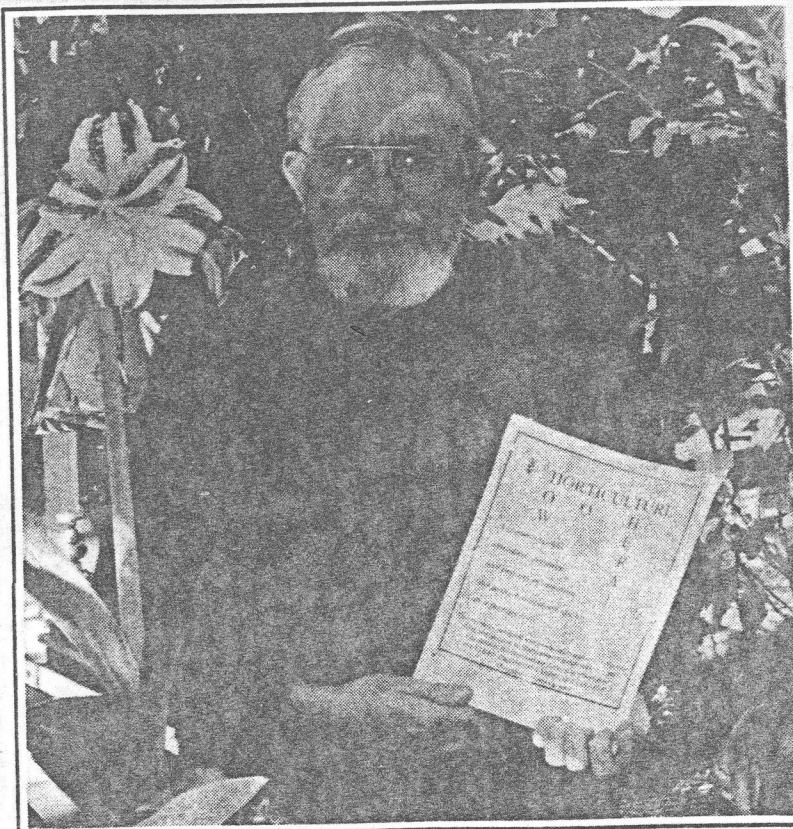
A by-product of WPCC's horticulture therapy class has been the creation of a resource manual called "How To: Horticulture Therapy" under the direction of Bob Dockery, WPCC Program Coordinator of Horticulture Technology. As a class project, students gathered resources from every niche possible to form the resource book which is designed

to help the newcomer as well as the veteran.

Says Dockery, "It is the wish that the book is never finished, but that the reader/ user would contribute their experiences and resources to the next printing and therefore benefit everyone in the area of horticulture therapy (HT). We have made every attempt to include all sources of the information (author name, Internet address, or publication source, etc.) as well as original work from the class."

The more than 550-page resource book is designed to introduce, organize and present information for using horticulture skills as a therapy tool. "How To: Horticulture Therapy" will be used by professionals in the fields of mental health, hospice, therapeutic recreation, gerontology, social work, rehabilitation programs and hospitals. It may be purchased at cost.

Contact the Director of Public Relations, 704-438-6013, or the Horticulture Technology Program, (704) 438-6075, at Western Piedmont Community College for more information. TDD (704) 438-6066.



Bob Dockery holds a copy of the resource manual.