Remarks by Anne Riley  
Member, Board of Trustees  
Dedication of the Hosler Oak  
The Arboretum at Penn State/Mitchell Tract  
Wednesday, September 28, 2005  
2:30 p.m.

Thank you, Graham. Good afternoon, everyone. I am so happy to be asked to speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees. I know the Arboretum will provide a fitting legacy for our land-grant mission. The Arboretum will be so inviting that people will want to return again and again.

As Graham has suggested, Charlie is a “Mr. Penn State” of the first order, admired and respected by all who know him or know of him. Since I grew up here and stayed on in the Valley, I’m one of the lucky ones who, over the years, has known Charlie as a friend.

In the Arboretum, the Hosler Oak will witness the construction of facilities such as the education center, an event lawn directly in front of the Hosler Oak, a conservatory, and a pavilion. The tree will also witness the development of a rose and fragrance garden, a pond and fountain, a wetland and aquatic garden. As a teacher, I am especially delighted to learn of the Children’s Education Center that will be here.

The children’s center is designed to be an outdoor classroom to teach local and visiting children to love their green world and to have fun there in a whimsical way. It will be a place of unscripted play so that children will not absorb its message in one visit, but will beg their parents and teachers to let them return. The center will serve pre-school and elementary school audiences, providing a hands-on educational venue for elementary education students at the University.

The children’s center is divided into three learning zones: The Ridge and Valley, Plant Travel Through Time, and Bug Buddies. The ridge and valley zone features an entrance court of limestone caverns that will have a rolling and romping lawn sculpted to mirror the surrounding ridge and valley formations of the region. Plantings to suggest the Pennsylvania woodlands will provide shade and enclosure for learning about native woodland plant associations and the importance of our woodland habitat.

The second zone, Plant Travel Through Time, walks children through eras that naturally intrigue them and shows them the essential role that plants have always had. It begins with Dinosaur Days and is followed by Indian Times. Another garden is called Pioneer Play. The last zone in Plant Travel Through Time is Plants of Today, featuring foods that feed the world, an eat-what-you-grow garden of fun with fantastic, eatable flowers. There, children will be invited to water and care for the plants.
The third and final zone in the children’s education center is Bug Buddies. Bug Buddies shows that most bugs are our friends. They need plants just as plants need them. I am only one grown-up of many who has always wanted to attend Penn State’s Summer Bug Camp. Now, here it will be, for all. The first garden in Bug Buddies is called Plant Helpers. It will showcase plants that attract live insects such as butterflies and bees. An earthworm dig will show how bugs help below the ground. Across the walk will be the ant maze for us to learn that ants are social creatures. Ants set up chambers and tunnels and gather their food and store it. Next to the ant maze is a garden called Bug Defense. And the last part of Bug Buddies is the dragonfly pond where children will be invited to visit the boardwalk to see the fish, water striders, and dragonflies and to understand how aquatic plants help keep the creatures alive. An interactive stream feeds the pond for which the source is the limestone caverns back at the entrance to the center.

Just think, Charlie, think of all the children, the children of all ages, who will explore, experience, and learn here. This arboretum is part of your Penn State legacy—I cry for joy! Thank you.