

# EDITH J. CARRIER

# ARBORETUM™

AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY



Photo By Frank Doherty

## Summer Newsletter

JUNE 2012

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Page 1:** From The Director

**Page 2:** Catching Up With The Education Committee

**Page 3-4:** Understories Sharing Our Memories

**Page 5-6:** At Home in the Woods

**Page 7:** Upcoming Events

## From The Director

Volunteers are an essential part and key component of the EJC Arboretum team. Each year individuals and groups from the community, local colleges and high schools, Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners, the Shenandoah Native Plant Society, and others help us with many tasks, from setting up tours and programs to the planting of trees and caring for our gardens.

With the help of several volunteer crew leaders, the EJC Arboretum began hosting Saturday work days this spring with various college service groups working side-by-side. A local Girl Scout troop planted more than 100 tree saplings with help from several JMU students and Betty Rosson Forest, a long-time Girl Scout leader and current EJC Arboretum volunteer. Betty is a Master Naturalist who helps to plant and care for the shale barren feature. Her enthusiasm for native plants keeps our staff smiling and ready to lend her a hand. As she says, "I love knowing that these plants will be here in the future for students, children, and us oldies to study."

Another volunteer, Dwayne Martin, comes weekly and generously shares his Jack-in-the-Pulpit divisions with us for planting in the EJC Arboretum and for selling at our plant sales. You can find him back in the greenhouse area unloading his plants by the armload, planting bulbs, or digging up herbs and shrubs to transplant from one garden to another. Dwayne is truly a Jack-of-all-garden-duties volunteer.

Throughout the school year, scores of JMU students show up to tend the many gardens, assist in the nursery and greenhouse, and help us with plant sales. For all the time given through so many hands we are grateful, THANK YOU! Visit our website to [sign-up as an EJC Arboretum volunteer!](#)

"This piece of land, this arboretum, is dedicated to stabilizing and balancing the lives of those who visit it. This space is also dedicated to the needs of ordinary people who seek renewal... who simply need an infusion of nature to better handle their days."

—Dr. Ronald Carrier, JMU  
President Emeritus



Jan Sievers Mahon



# CATCHING UP WITH THE

## Education Committee

*The EJC Arboretum Education Committee members include Joe Sharrer, Carol Flora, Sherry Leffel, Tom Lord, Ginny Chandler, Betty Chappell and Cathy Copeland.*



Turk's Cap Lily, *Lilium sumerbum* (photo by Frank Doherty)



Rose-breasted grosbeak (photo by Diane Lepkowski)



Cardinal flower, *Lobelia cardinalis* (staff photo)

- The Education Committee has accomplished quite a bit recently and is gearing up for fun changes to come.
- The current Education Coordinator, Cathy Copeland, will be leaving her position at the end of June, following the April birth of her son, Latham Patrick. She is training her replacement, Julia Stutzman, an adjunct biology instructor at JMU, for a smooth transition.
- The Education Committee created a new program this spring, the Wine & Cheese Lecture Series. This program will be offered several times throughout the growing season and will be held at the Ernst Tree Terrace. The kick-off event featured experts who spoke on present and historic Virginia wines and included wine and cheese service. Future Wine & Cheese Lectures will revolve around educational and entertaining botanical topics, while including wine and cheese. Don't miss the chance to mingle with friends at the EJC Arboretum's beautiful new Ernst Tree Terrace; look for the next Wine & Cheese Lecture on the arboretum website announcement page soon.
- The Education Committee has also been working on the following: producing large-scale signs for the pond area, the Herb Garden, and the Labyrinth; tracking peak wildflower blooming times; organizing the Brown Bag Lunch Lecture series for the summer (see the Events schedule on the last pages of this newsletter); and finishing the audio tour for the EJC Arboretum.





# UNDERSTORIES

Photo By Frank Doherty

## Sharing Our Favorite Memories

EJC Arboretum Board members recall special memories of the EJC Arboretum.

### The Very Beginning

“Edith and I lived in Oakview (a neighborhood that adjoins the EJC Arboretum), and we enjoyed walks in the woods of the far back campus. One evening as we enjoyed the beauty of the forest, I noted the dust of construction to the North. I looked at Edith, and we knew that this place should be preserved.

For several years (JMU botany professor) Dr. Norlyn Bodkin had asked for an arboretum and botanical garden. I called him, and this place of beauty was started.

It is the last place for nature in the growing campus and the city. This Edith J. Carrier Arboretum will be a place of peace, renewal and education for many generations.”

-- Dr. Ronald E. Carrier, President Emeritus, James Madison University

### Family Time

“My favorite memory has to be when I, with guests, family, and friends, watched my son marry his bride at the EJC Arboretum a full year before I became an employee or even imagined I would ever join the EJC Arboretum staff team.

Before my son’s arboretum wedding, the EJC Arboretum was a “discovery” when I moved my daughter into Chesapeake Hall her freshman year at JMU. I noticed the gardens and asked my daughter if she knew anything about them, urging her to check things out. She did, and we enjoyed mom and daughter visits walking the trails or sitting on a bench by the pond waterfall.”

-- Gail Turnbull, Assistant Director, EJC Arboretum

### The Early Days

“I have many special memories about the origin of the EJC Arboretum, starting with learning from Dr. (Norlyn) Bodkin that his proposal for an arboretum at JMU was approved by the administration



and that he and President Carrier had walked around the Newman property across University Boulevard and had found a suitable location for an arboretum project.

Equally memorable was the day trees came down and a bulldozer carved out the original entry road and parking lot. Another memory was the \$7,500 gift made to get the arboretum started from Dan Daniel (a Congressional representative from Danville) via his family member who was a botany student of Dr. Bodkin’s. That gift was enormously important in that it allowed contracting with a landscape architect to create a large and beautiful artistic rendition of a plan for the original 22 acres. The plan, done on an approximately 5’ by 5’ board, was instrumental in obtaining several significant donations that got the arboretum started.

I did so many jobs for the arboretum that were not part of my biology department job. Some were making lists of native plants, ordering and planting them, and helping to plant them; designing the plantings at the original entrance, the daffodil walk and the Andrew Wood Garden; and guiding many educational tours of the arboretum. And I couldn’t forget the fall semester of 1990 when I was the interim director while Dr. Bodkin was on sabbatical. A crisis developed immediately when a



Photo By Frank Doherty



# UNDERSTORIES

Tufted titmouse  
(photo by Diane Lepkowski)



## Continued

pipe to the water spigot near the message board broke and caused a gusher, but Facilities Management personnel quickly came to the rescue.”

-- Emily Branscome, EJC Arboretum Board Member, Botanical Committee, retired Laboratory Specialist, JMU

### The Twin Leaf

“Spring in the arboretum is a magical time when the forest floor blooms. A special treat is the twin leaf named for Thomas Jefferson that lasts but a few days.”

-- Joe Sharrer, EJC Arboretum Board Member, Education Committee

### Walking the Trails

“My favorite part of the EJC Arboretum is walking the trails and realizing that I am walking through different garden rooms of plant collections and habitats.”

Walking through the Oak-Hickory Forest with the feeling of strength and beauty from the taller trees with the open areas between the trunks and then

suddenly coming up on Fern Valley. Wow! Huge ferns that are cooling and a more moist habitat that gives me a feeling of wonderment and mystery different than the place I just left. The rhododendrons are taller than I am, so I cannot see what is coming up around the corner, so the walk is usually filled with a surprise, compared to the pond area that is open and bright with activity of the red slider turtles, catfish and waterfowl bring.

The EJC Arboretum does not have large wildlife in sight, but it is the only place I have seen and learned that squirrels eat mushrooms, or that slugs give off a yellow staining slime if you pick them up, or that a black widow spider that lives under the rocks in the Herb Garden area is so jet black and beautiful. It is a small wooded oasis in a growing city. I can breathe easy there, feel the coolness of the Earth and let the busyness of my day roll off my shoulders.”

-- Ginny Chandler, EJC Arboretum Board Member, Botanical Committee

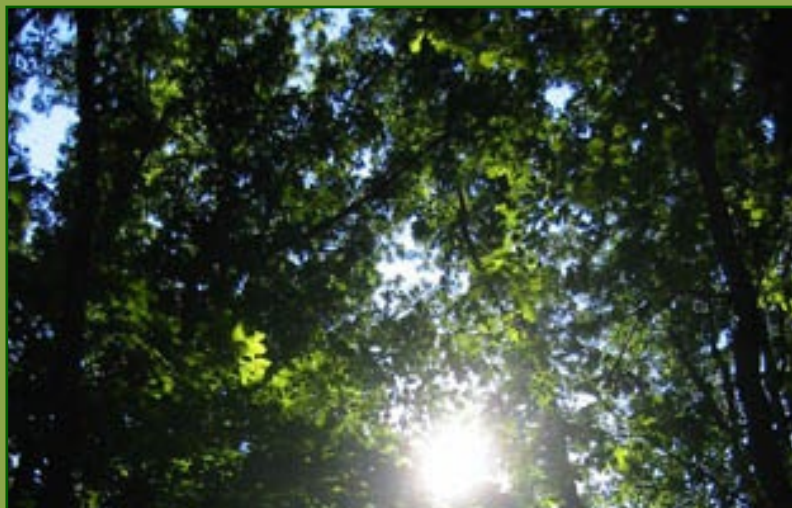
### Wildlife Delights

“The EJC Arboretum is close to my workplace, so I often spend my lunch hour there. What a treat to relax in such a scenic spot! I especially enjoy all the wildlife and have had many memorable moments that include:

- a turtle sunning himself on a rock in the pond, with all four legs sticking straight out in what must be one of those ‘turtle yoga’ poses
- the annual spring ritual of ducklings parading around behind mama duck
- a robin gathering nesting materials, with his beak so full of straws that it resembles an unkempt bristly moustache
- the ducks scurrying to the duck food dispenser the moment they hear the distinctive ‘squeak’ of the dispenser knob turning

But perhaps most delightful is hearing the reactions of the children -- ‘Dad, turtles!’ or ‘Grandma, look at the little ducks!’ -- who are so excited by the opportunity to see nature up close.”

-- Milla Sue Wisecarver, EJC Arboretum Board Member, Public Relations Committee



Staff photo





## Young Children Soon to Discover They Are “At Home in the Woods” at the EJC Arboretum

*Two recently completed donor projects (the Ernst Tree Terrace and the Plecker Pond Loop Trail) were dedicated in April, and now the EJC Arboretum is moving into new territory by offering family features that focus on gardens for young children. These gardens provide donor opportunities at all levels of giving and to those desiring to support the creation of places that help nurture young bodies and minds while discovering nature and exploring outdoor spaces.*

The “At Home in the Woods” projects include garden and discovery areas for children of all ages with the initial focus on younger children (5 years and younger). Phase 1, or the Little Legs Loop, includes four features that will delight those of all ages with whimsical, wooded play gardens, shaded canopy above and imagination stations on the forest floor that engage parents, grandparents and young children (9 years and younger) to explore the woods as through a forest creature’s eyes, and learn how we all are connected through the forest web. Features of the Little Legs Loop include:

**Creature Comforts** -- a grounds-eye view of a black snake, a skunk, or a ruffed grouse; nests, dens, and snake hole scoots comprise this area with opportunities for puppet play and creations made from sticks, wood slabs, nuts, and bark.

**Soil Builders** -- invites children to get comfortable digging in the earth, crawling through logs and taking a closer look at mushrooms, moss, roots and the necessary role of decay through play in the stumpery garden.

**Bramble Scramble** -- entices children to hop, jump, and run while learning colors through artfully created stump and rock climbs that present the textures and forms of nature in the colors of the rainbow.

**Mist-ery Bridge** -- a mist-blown crossing providing refreshing relief on a hot day or just plain misty-moisty fun on either end of the bridge; a chance to visit with the bridge-keeper (a chipmunk), and an entrance to other features down the oak-hickory trail.

Throughout each feature children can look for the garden host of this project-- the Redbacked Salamander-- found in ceramic form scattered throughout the different garden areas. Each feature provides opportunities for artistically created works in the gardens by local artisans and JMU art students.

Our vision of accessible access, from the Pavilion and through the family feature areas down to the pond, continues with this project.

Gifts from donors are essential to continue reaching families and JMU students involved in design, planning, and educational programming. Find out more about “At Home in the Woods” -- visit our website and [make a gift today.](#)



*Creature Comforts (artist's conception)*



*Mist-ery Bridge (artist's conception)*

# Conceptual Illustrations



Note: Existing tree canopy not depicted

**Family Moments - Phase One Concept Plan**  
**"At Home in the Woods"**  
 Edith J. Carrier Arboretum  
 James Madison University  
 200 South Street, Harrison, VA 22059  
 April 17, 2012  
 1" = 200'

**Signage Key**

- Interpretive Moment (0.5-1.5 years)
- Discovery Gate
- Forest Understory Enhancement
- Forest Understory Screening
- Proposed Steps & Ramping Wall
- Themed Bridge
- Little Lugs Loop (0.5 years)
- Proposed Perrone Steps
- Identity Signage
- Builder Phase & Pioneer Planting
- Family Moments Little Lugs Loop
- Pressure Corridor
- Over Hill & Out Trail
- Pioneer Species Trail
- Trail Builders
- Working Plan (use only trail material)
- Plants and signage
- Plants

**Legend**

- Interpretive Moment (0.5-1.5 years)
- Discovery Gate
- Forest Understory Enhancement
- Forest Understory Screening
- Proposed Steps & Ramping Wall
- Themed Bridge
- Little Lugs Loop (0.5 years)
- Proposed Perrone Steps

photo credit

# 2012 Calendar

For more information or to make reservations for events, go to the **EJC Arboretum website** ([www.jmu.edu/arboretum](http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum)) or contact us at 540-568-3194. Note that within selected calendar items there is a link to more information and to the registration page for the event. Also, a complete listing of all events scheduled for the next 12 months can be found at the website's **Calendar of Events**.

- **June 1 to July 23:** Steven Johnson, Minimalist and contemporary nature photography, Art exhibit in the \*FPEC, FREE, during business hours.

- **June 12:** Storytime in the Understory. 11:00 a.m. – noon (approx.) at the Stage Garden. Monthly program begins in June and continues through September, on the second Tuesday of each month. Children will develop an understanding of the importance of nature from children's literature selections. Bring a picnic blanket or lawn chairs and a brown bag lunch for after Storytime.

- **June through August:** Summer Brown Bag Lunch Lecture Series. Wednesdays at noon. The Pavilion. No advance registration needed; enjoy lunch and a great topical lecture. FREE

- June 20, Flower Arranging
- June 27, Pruning Like a Pro
- July 11, Container Gardening
- July 18, Banding Owls
- Aug. 1, Heirloom Tomato Tasting

- **June 23:** Solstice under the Stars. 7:00-10:00 p.m. Reserve to enjoy a wild and wonderful Solstice outdoor celebration with dancing to live music on the Ernst Tree Terrace with dinner and choice of alcoholic beverages which may include fine wines and local brewed beer. Advance reservations are required, by 4 p.m. June 19. Register

online or contact us at 540-568-3194. Rain cancels this outdoor event. \$28 per person.

- **Aug. 1 to Sept. 28:** Janet Cardwell, artist. Enjoy the delicate washes and luminosity of floral watercolors. Art exhibit in the \*FPEC, FREE, during business hours.

- **Aug. 31:** Blue Moon Summer Carriage Rides. 7:00-10:00 p.m. \$10 per adult, \$7 per child, \$58 for private carriage. (Carriages seat 6.) Enjoy being drawn through the woodlands of the EJC Arboretum by beautiful Belgians or Percherons horse teams and an experienced coachman on a warm summer night in the woods in a romantic convertible carriage under the light of a rare summertime Blue Moon! Advance reservations required; email [turnbugl@jmu.edu](mailto:turnbugl@jmu.edu) or call 540-568-3914.

- **Sept.:** Fall Annual Remarkable Trees Tour, date to be announced on [jmu.edu/arboretum](http://jmu.edu/arboretum). See the remarkable trees of the Shenandoah Valley region traveling with the EJC Arboretum Director as guide. Visit the EJC Arboretum for details for this annual educational and enjoyable field trip, and to register. Every fall the EJC Arboretum leads a guided tour to a remarkable trees site in northwestern Virginia in the height of autumn color. Field trip fee will apply.

- **Sept. 10 to Oct. 8:** On-Line Bulbs Sale. Pick up in the \*FPEC for orders placed online.

- **Sept. 22:** Monarch Migration Tagging Workshop. 10:00 a.m. – noon in the Pavilion. With Linda Marchman, educator and butterfly farm owner. Enjoy a lecture and various activities, for children age seven to adults, along with tagging and releasing Monarch

butterflies to start their seasonal migration. (Also available as a class field trip.) Register online at the EJC Arboretum website, \$20 per adult or child.

- **Sept. 28-29:** Fall Plant and Bulb Sale. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the \*FPEC. Shop a huge inventory of Virginia native wildflowers and cultivar perennials, shrubs and trees, and spring bulbs, at just the right time for fall planting.

**\*FPEC is the Frances Plecker Education Center, found on the grounds of the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at 780 University Boulevard, Harrisonburg, VA 22807**

Parking: Overflow event parking until mid-August can be found at the JMU Convocation Center Lot F (enter from University Blvd.) and Convo Lot G (enter from Driver Drive) and Lot R-5 (enter from University Blvd.). A parking lot map is available online at <http://web.jmu.edu/parking/parkingmap.pdf>.

The EJC Arboretum was voted the "Best Place to Relax" and "Best Place to Propose" in the annual reader survey by the Harrisonburg Daily News-Record.

