

E D I T H J . C A R R I E R

ARBORETUM

AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Dear Friends of the Arboretum,

The whacky winter weather has yielded to spring's second flush of glistening green and luminous colors. Spring arrived considerably earlier this year than in the past. Winter this year was a pick-a-season, any-season and you got it, kind of winter. The arboretum began its wildflower wonderland in February, a month early. Many flowers showed themselves, some for only days, before being hit by March's sudden plunge in temperature. Now the radiance has returned and spring is back on track.

Thank
You to
Arboretum
Endowment
Donors!

Two new collaborations at the arboretum are designed to provide more housing for our birds, reptiles and amphibians. With heightened visibility of these creatures, visitors may become more familiar with their nesting and sheltering behaviors. Look for four new bluebird houses on posts and five wren houses in shrubbery throughout the arboretum. Three screech-owl boxes will be installed in the coming months.

Many tagged black rubber research coverboards will be placed in March and April by JMU herpetology students in the upper arboretum above the Frances Plecker Education Center and in the Children's Garden. Located along the trails, these coverboards will give visitors easy access to peek under the coverboards to discover the creatures taking shelter there. The hope is that there will be salamanders, snakes, frogs and blue-tailed skinks to be seen under the coverboards, along with a host of insects and invertebrates.

I'm pleased to announce that the Chesapeake Stormwater Network has awarded the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum with a 2017 Best Stream Restoration Honorable Mention for the stream restoration project that began in Sycamore Flat in 2015. This project continues with the opening of trails, moving of gardens out of the floodway, and with the additions of two bridges and a boardwalk in the future.

Many thanks to Rockingham Bird Club and the Alternative Spring Break office for the funding and support to install new nesting boxes, and to JMU Biology Professor Dr. McLeod and his students for funding and installing the new coverboards in the arboretum!

May the spring rains begin!

Cheers,

Jan Sievers Mahon
Director



Azalea and Rhododendron Garden - In Memory of Kenneth McDonald, Jr.

Azaleas and rhododendrons, known for their large flowers and radiant colors in the spring, are two very popular shrubs. The Edith J. Carrier Arboretum is one of two public gardens in the state of Virginia that is home to a McDonald collection of azaleas and rhododendrons. With Ken McDonald's recent passing (Feb.5, 1935-Jan. 31, 2017) it is fitting that he be remembered and honored. We want to highlight a legacy rhododendron garden that he gifted to the arboretum. Ken was a distinguished nurseryman who served in several plant associations and societies while managing Le-Mac Nurseries for 39 years in Hampton, Virginia.

The arboretum's McDonald Garden was created in 1994 with the help of Ken and Sandra McDonald, owners of Le-Mac Azaleas. The arboretum began collecting rhododendrons three years before when Dr. Doug Jolley and volunteers with the the Mid-Atlantic Chapter (MAC)-American Rhododendron Society (ARS), contributed 34 plants of seven different species of rhododendrons to the arboretum.

In the process of downsizing their nursery, the McDonalds gifted mature plants that were over 20 years old ranging from 5 to 7 feet tall to the Arboretum. Ron Brown, a MAC member and arboretum volunteer at the time, headed up the effort to move not only azaleas but mature rhododendrons too. The digging, transporting and transplanting began in 1994, and resulted in over 500 plants being added to the arboretum's collection. Thankfully due to their shallow roots,

these plants could be transplanted from the sandy soils of Tidewater Virginia to the alkaline karst soils in the valley. Today hundreds of McDonald azaleas and rhododendrons with their brilliance and beauty still grace the arboretum grounds. The Sandra and Kenneth McDonald Azalea and Rhododendron Garden was dedicated on May 30, 1996 with over 90 MAC-ARS members and JMU staff and friends in attendance.

Over the years three more gardens were added: a native azalea garden, a Glenn Dale azalea garden and a small leaf and large leaf rhododendron garden. Improvements included adding plaques, a bench and new plants that enhanced the display and expanded how visitors enjoy these gardens. The local MAC chapter of dedicated volunteers continue to give of their time and expertise every spring and fall; and they continue to make gifts to fund caring for these rhododendrons. MAC volunteers are currently working on rehabilitating the native azalea garden by adding design elements and new plantings. The arboretum is grateful for the continued help and support from MAC-ARS volunteers.

“... dedicated volunteers continue to give of their time and their expertise ... and to make gifts to fund and care for these rhododendrons.”



The Azalea and Rhododendron Garden dedicated to Sandra and Ken McDonald



Rhododendron. Photo by James Stimpert

JMU's Herbarium Has a New Name!

The Bodkin Herbarium provides students with a modern, fully equipped, efficient teaching and research facility.

On June 6, 2016, JMU's herbarium facility was officially named the Norlyn L. Bodkin Herbarium. The ceremony, held at the herbarium in JMU's Bioscience building, was attended by friends, family, faculty and staff. For those who are not familiar with herbaria, an herbarium is a collection of pressed, dried plants that are mounted on paper then housed in cabinets, arranged alphabetically by scientific name.

In 1964 when Bodkin joined the Department of Biology at then Madison College, the herbarium was housed in Burruss Hall and consisted of two cabinets and about 2,500 specimens. When Dr. Bodkin retired from teaching in 1998, the herbarium had well over 13,000 specimens! In addition, during his tenure, the herbarium was recognized in Index Herbariorum, an international directory of herbaria. The growth of the herbarium during Bodkin's tenure was from his own collections, those of his field botany classes and collections of several undergraduate and graduate students.

Teaching and research collections of bryophytes, ferns and fern allies, gymnosperms, and angiosperms, as well as a small collection of algae are also kept in the Bodkin Herbarium. In addition, housed in the herbarium is a small library, which contains a variety of Floras, botany textbooks, identification keys and journals.

The Bodkin Herbarium provides students with a modern, fully equipped, efficient teaching and research facility. Now, over 18,000 specimens are housed at the Bodkin Herbarium. Although most specimens are from Virginia and West Virginia, other states are represented along with specimens collected in other countries including Canada, Ecuador and Poland. The two oldest specimens, given to the Bodkin Herbarium in 2007 by The Natural History Museum in London, England, were collected in Portsmouth, Virginia, by German botanist Ferdinand Ignatius Xavier Rugel in 1840!

Join with the Arboretum Board, staff, and Dr. Bodkin's family and friends as we recognize the one-year anniversary of the renamed Norlyn L. Bodkin Herbarium.

*By Dr. Conley K. McMullen
Arboretum Board, Botanical Committee Chairman
JMU Biology and Botany professor*



Page Bodkin, Dr. Conley McMullen, Ms. Marian Roberno and Dr. Anne Murphy, daughters of Dr. Bodkin, attend a ceremony in Bodkin's honor.

Children, Learning and Little Growing Things

Little growing things at the arboretum, like swelling buds, flowers in bloom and turtles soaking in the sun... mean it is time to gear up for exciting children's programs this spring! The arboretum will again offer events designed to not only spark children's excitement about nature, but also to engage them in art instruction and craft activities that reinforce learning about native and non-native plants and animals.

Dr. Morgan Steffen, JMU Biology Professor, returned for another WonderWater Workshop in March. Children learned using microscopes to view and identify tiny living things in water samples from home and the Shenandoah River, and even Hawaii and the Bahamas.

Little people enjoy learning about little growing things.

In April, the arboretum will again partner with a local middle school science class to plant a native tree on school grounds for Arbor Day. Students will learn about the history of Arbor Day and how to care for their little sapling. In May, the Fairy Houses and Gnome Homes Storytime program will invite children to hear a story about fairies, and then use their imaginations to build their own fairy house or gnome home in the arboretum woods.

The arboretum children's programming staff are especially looking forward to a first-ever, week-long summer Explorer Camp in June. Young nature enthusiasts will spy on birds, turn over logs to search for salamanders, and meet 100-year-old trees and more. Campers will delve daily into a new theme in the natural sciences and arts: bugs and insects, birds, aquatic life, reptiles and amphibians, and native plants. Bring on the scavenger hunts!

July will bring a Summer Children's Art Workshop. In multiple-session, summer-themed, small-group art classes taught by

local artists, children will learn how to dye natural fibers with dyes made from Virginia plants. Using those fibers, the budding artists will then learn the basics of weaving.

Students from dozens of homeschool co-ops and public schools from Harrisonburg and Rockingham County will take free educational tours in the arboretum's oak-hickory forest

to discover how living organisms coexist and thrive among non-living features in the forest ecology. Our interpretive interns and docents guide students in creating artistic leaf rubbings

of native tree leaves and making Throw-and-Grow Seed Balls to take away to germinate and grow wildflowers at their homes or schools.

What better place than the arboretum for children to discover new species, uncover the secrets of the forest ecosystem and engage in imaginative play? Visit our website www.jmu.edu/arboretum for updates on 2017 children's programs at the EJC Arboretum.

*By Nichole Barrows
Education Coordinator*



Flowers bloom during springtime in the arboretum

2017 Artist in Residence, Martha Crider Henderson

With the returning warmth of spring, an interior wall in the arboretum's Pavilion is soon to become the canvas of muralist and impressionist painter and 2017 Artist in Residence, Martha Crider Henderson. Imagine the opportunity that begins in April. Visit the arboretum and take a seat in the Pavilion to watch, sketch along with the artist on your own sketch pad, and overhear her live ongoing commentary while she paints her mural. Interact with a leading artist in the Shenandoah Valley art community. Yes, the local art community is rich with talent, there is no doubt! But there are few artists who have the unique gift of managing ratio and composition perspectives on the large scale and scope that murals require, and can handle the expanse of painted imagery over an architectural feature rather than a canvas.

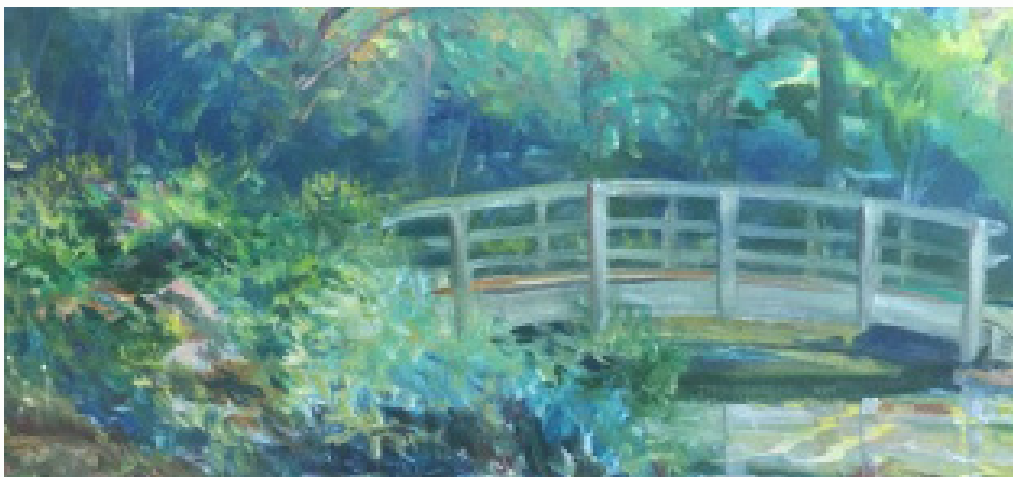
For eons of time, artists have taught artists, and beginning artists have eagerly sat under the tutorship of masters to learn, hone, acquire and heighten their own skills. This is the opportunity that aspiring muralists have been waiting for. Or, for artists not wanting to "expand" – pun intended – their painting talents into mural work, Martha returns with plein air sessions this spring as well. Watch the arboretum website and Facebook page for announcements for when her mural painting began! Then enjoy free, walk-up, come-and-go learning experiences with Martha.

This summer, on July 12 at noon in the Pavilion, with the arboretum providing drinks and cookies, come for a "Meet and Greet" with Martha Crider Henderson as part of our brown bag lunch series. Martha gives a brief overview of her Artist in Residence projects for 2017, socializes and answers questions about her mural and other plein air painting programs.

A renowned muralist and Shenandoah Valley artist, Martha has a passion for capturing the beauty surrounding her. Time and again commissioned, this impressionist artist was one of the first women to be selected for membership in the Washington Society of Landscape Painters, a then male-only society formed on the once-held basis that women weren't up to the rigors of on-location painting. Martha again proves the prowess of her plein air painting skills throughout her residency at the EJC Arboretum, the region's favorite outdoor place for restoration recreation, bringing guests, proposing marriage and so much more.

Watch for announcements online for when Martha Henderson's mural painting has begun.

Gail Turnbull
Arboretum Assistant Director



By Martha Crider Henderson from the Sept. and Oct. 2016 exhibit at the EJC Arboretum



Student shares her experiences in the arboretum

“I felt an excitement growing, like an explorer finding the wilderness for the first time.”

On the warmest, sunniest, most blue sky day of February, I had an overwhelming desire to be outside. I decided that a visit to the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum would be a wonderful way to spend my free time. I had been there once before, during my freshman year of college. Now, as a senior, I was going back just to enjoy some time in nature.

When I drove into the arboretum to park, I couldn't help but notice that the iron gate looked like a butterfly. My adventure started as I walked across the bridge that overlooks the pond and saw happy little ducks swimming around in the water. Chirps and tweets of birds filled the air as they flew around and landed in the tall tree branches overhead. Squirrels scampered around and ran up and down trees and through the leaves still on the ground. I breathed in deeply and smelled the flowers that blossomed around me; sprouted yellow daffodils were soaking up the sunshine. I breathed out and noticed the way that air in nature felt so much more fresh and clean. I wanted to stay in this place as long as possible.

I wandered through the trails, deeper into the arboretum. As the roads and buildings of the college disappeared, I felt an excitement growing, like an explorer finding the wilderness for the first time. Throughout the trails, I noticed statues carved out of stone. One of the angel statues in a memorial garden made me think about loved ones that I've lost. I sat on a stone bench nearby that had patterns carved into its back. After a few minutes of remembrance, I moved on.

The last place I visited was the Labyrinth where rocks are arranged to make a path that circles in on itself with a larger stone in the center. Since labyrinths are a meditative art form created to reflect life's journey, I walked through it in silent meditation and lingered in the center for a few moments before I followed the path out. I left that day with a beautiful memory and full of excitement; I was already planning my next adventure to the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum.

Katelyn Petty, JMU 2017



April showers bring May flowers

CALENDAR EVENTS

Wildflower Walks

Wednesday, April 12, 2017 at 1 p.m.

Wednesday, May 3, 2017 at 10 a.m.

In the Frances Plecker Education Center

Join our Arboretum Director in the Arboretum Exploration Series Tours spaced throughout the ephemeral growing season. Enjoy viewing dozens of bulb varieties, wood blooming shrubs and ephemeral wildflowers on exhibit arboretum. Advance registration is not required.

Community Yoga and Tai Chi

Yoga Saturdays for 8 weeks, starting April 8

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. on the Ernst Terrace

Tai Chi Mondays starting April 3 4:30 - 5:30 p.m on the Lawn

Grab your mat, water bottle and towel and join the newest instructors from The Nest Yoga and Fitness Studio for yoga Saturday mornings. Then Tai Chi meets Monday afternoons. Register online at www.thenestyoga.org.

Arbor Day Trees and Native Plant Sale

Friday, April 21 - Saturday, April 22, 2017

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Frances Plecker Education Center

For savvy gardeners wanting a garden filled with plants tailored by Mother Nature to be suited to regional climate and precipitation, the arboretum's Native Plant Sale is the right place to shop. Shop hard-to-find native plants, shrubs and trees. Visit our website for examples of plants, shrubs and trees offered at the sale. Plan your landscaping improvements, and then come to the EJC Arboretum Arbor Day Trees and Native Plant Sale!

Butterflies Are Emerging

Friday, April 21, 2017

Noon - 1 p.m. in the Frances Plecker Education Center

Come and find out about the 45 species of butterflies emerging and what plants you can provide for them. Join speaker Gail Napora, a Virginia Master Naturalist and butterfly enthusiast. Children who have an adult hand to hold are welcome to attend. This is a free event during the Arbor Day Trees and Native Plant Sale. Butterfly release follows.

Fairy Houses and Gnome Homes

Tuesday, April 25 and Thursday, May 11, 2017

11 a.m. - noon at the Journey Stage Garden

Children and their caregivers are invited to come hear a story about fairies and build their very own fairy house or gnome home! Fairy houses are built outside so dress for the weather. Bring a brown bag lunch to enjoy during the story. This program is free.

Tree Tour Honoring Virginia Arbor Day

Friday, April 26, 2017

1 p.m. in the Frances Plecker Education Center

See arboretum woodland flowers and learn about Virginia native trees and see the Century Trees found at the arboretum. Then after seeing where these grow naturally, learn about growing native shrubs and trees and their particular environmental needs to be able to plan tree and shrub purchases for any home or business gardens at the sale coming in May.



Stop by the arboretum on April 21-22 for our Arbor Day Trees and Native Plant Sale! Photo by Lynn Whitmore

CALENDAR EVENTS

Wine and Cheese

Friday, May 12, 2017
5 - 7 p.m. on the Ernst Terrace

Enjoy wine and cheese tasting outside in nature's beauty. Sue McKown, beekeeper, will be this year's lecturer. Reception at 5, demonstration by the Executive Pastry Sous Chef at 5:30, and guest speaker at 6. Cost per person is \$20.

Mother's Day Carriage Rides

Sunday, May 14, 2017
1 - 4 p.m. in the arboretum

Give a special mom a memorable celebration with a carriage ride through the natural beauty of the arboretum. Carriages leave from the Frances Plecker Education Center. Costs vary per person for adults and children, and per private carriage. Call (540) 568-3194 for prices and reservations.

Spring Celebration Plant Sale

Friday, May 19 - Saturday, May 20, 2017
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Frances Plecker Education Center

We offer a wide selection of plants, shrubs and trees to make any home or business landscape ecofriendly and lovely.

Butterflies Release

Saturday, May 20, 2017
Noon at the Journey Stage Garden

Join our facilitator Gail Napora for our butterfly release during the Spring Celebration Plant Sale. This is a free event, no registration needed. Free parking in Convo G.

Encouraging Caterpillars

Friday, June 9, 2017
Noon - 1 p.m. at the Frances Plecker Education Center patio

Every caterpillar needs the correct food to be able to "chrysalis" into a butterfly or moth. Come and learn more about seven of our most common butterflies and three of our largest moths: what the caterpillars eat, where they hide and how they transform. Included in this talk is guidance on hosting monarch caterpillars which Gail did in 2016 in a bigger way at her own Monarch Way Station.

Arboretum Explorer Camp

Monday, June 19 - Friday, June 23, 2017
9 a.m. - noon session for ages 5-7, 1 - 4 p.m. for ages 8-10
In the Frances Plecker Education Center

Our summer program is designed to encourage a love of the outdoors, foster environmental stewardship and inspire future scientists. Campers will catch bugs, learn about reptiles, investigate the pond, make crafts and go on daily nature walks. Cost per child is \$115 for the week.

Big Bug Hunt

Thursday, June 29 and July 27, 2017
Noon - 1 p.m. in the Frances Plecker Education Center

Come with us on a scavenger hunt for the fascinating insects that call the arboretum home! Learn about the different parts of an insect and how other invertebrates, such as spiders and millipedes are different. Children of all ages will discover how to make their backyards bug friendly while learning about all types of invertebrates. After the Big Bug Hunt, create your own stick bug to take home. This educational children's program is free.

