

E D I T H J . C A R R I E R
ARBORETUM
AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Dear Friends of the Arboretum,

The leaves had begun turning early this year in the Arboretum due to unseasonably cool temperatures, and it felt like summer had ended in early September, but not to be fooled. Hotter weather will likely return again here, with an Indian summer sure to show its face this fall.

The newly created four-season mural that was painted by Martha Crider Henderson this summer is now complete and graces the walls at the Pavilion. You can find the Pavilion along the main trail and next to the Children's Garden area. With your next visit, do stop by and take a peek. See the article on page 4.

I'm very happy to share that for the first time in the more recent history of the Arboretum, our new Explorer Camp was launched! For one week last summer two groups of young children, ages 5-7yrs. and 8-10 yrs., spent their mornings or afternoons here with us learning about nature through hands-on engaged learning that opened their eyes to views of the natural world they had yet to explore. Arboretum Education Coordinator Nichole Barrows and her team of JMU student counselors, Master Naturalists, and community volunteers provided an engaging program that was a huge success with the young ones and their parents! **We envision a donor endowing the camp, ensuring funds for future generations, to support both the campers' exploration of a wide and varied program, and to provide student interns opportunities to assist in the future development of this seasonal program.** Look for it again in June 2018 when the wee ones are invited to immerse themselves in nature here under the canopy of the oak-hickory forest.

It was an honor this year to discover that **Best Things Virginia listed the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum as one of their Ten Beautiful Botanical Gardens in VA!** We were listed among the larger well-known botanical gardens in Virginia. [Click here for the full listing.](#)

Did you know the Arboretum hosted 414 volunteers this fiscal year who served 2,510 hours? These hearty souls helped us beautify the Arboretum through community service time, worked in groups or as individuals, served weekly throughout each season in the gardens and forest, or contributed to educational programming. The state values this time served at \$65,260! We could not offer and maintain all that we do here without the help of such dedicated volunteers. [To find out more and join in with other volunteers, please visit our website.](#)

We are grateful to the many people who lend their time and talents,

Jan Sievers Mahon
Director

Thank
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Remembering a Legacy Leader and Arboretum Advocate, Dr. Ronald E. Carrier, 8/18/1932 – 9/18/2017

Dr. Carrier, much like a legacy tree, brought breath and scope to Madison College. The Arboretum likes to think of him as a “legacy leader” who brought to campus a flavor that has fully permeated campus inspired by his friendliness and caring nature. As the campus transformed itself from Madison College to James Madison University, that inspirational flavor remained, still existing today as a common quality identified by many young high schoolers who choose JMU as first choice on their college lists.

Dr. Carrier and Edith walked the College Woods together when living in nearby Forest Hills, so when Dr. Norlyn Bodkin came to him with a proposal for an arboretum to serve as an outdoor classroom, he understood the potential found within the woods and said, “Let’s do it!” After the arboretum officially opened, gifts were given by the Carriers in 1999 for the naming in recognition of Edith Carrier’s long-running service to the university as JMU’s fourth First Lady. She served with “grace, elegance, wit, wisdom, and affability.” The arboretum was then graced with an official name, the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at James Madison University.

Arboretum staff, with sad yet grateful hearts, remember Dr. Ronald E. Carrier as an ever-present advocate for the last 10 years in the life of the Arboretum. His steady and loyal support was one of good humor, kindness, and generosity, always willing to tackle a hurdle and hold the vision for an arboretum transformation. He enthusiastically urged the staff and board members forward, often eagerly supporting new initiatives himself. The Carrier Family Fountain, dedicated to Dr. Carrier and his family to mark his 80th birthday, remains as part of the Ernst Tree Terrace next to the Frances Plecker Education Center. The fountain serves as a beautiful, steady reminder of the contributions that Dr. Carrier brought to the campus and the Arboretum while serving both the university and the community. He will be sorely missed.

He recognized the value of a dedicated campus green space, botanical preserve, and outdoor classroom. Used both by the JMU campus learning community, regional students, and the local communities in Harrisonburg, the Shenandoah Valley, and beyond, he knew that thousands of visitors would come to learn formally and informally, to recreate and take restorative walks, and to mark passages in their lives surrounded by nature and beauty; offering sanctuary through the seasons of life. His words, shared at the naming dedication in the arboretum in 1999, recognizing the new name of, **Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU**, still say it ever so aptly:

“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,
8/18/1932 - 9/18/2017***

By Jan Sievers Mahon, Director



Dr. Carrier was the bridge to a new chapter in the life of this campus. He was the bridge from the Biology Department to the Board of Visitors for the creation of the Arboretum. He was a bridge to a new chapter in the life of the Arboretum when a Master Plan was created in 2002 and then revised in 2010.

Immerse Your Child in Nature

The Arboretum staff recognizes the importance of quality, outdoor experiences for children in Harrisonburg. In fact, a study by researchers at Cornell University showed that nature programs for children have more long lasting effects on children's connectedness to nature if the programs are immersive and occur before age 11 (Wells and Lekies, 2006). Recognizing that early childhood exposure to nature is a strongly predictive factor in adults' attitude toward the environment, the Arboretum aims to provide a diverse array of high-interest programs in order to introduce young children to the flora and fauna found on our grounds.

With that goal in mind, we look forward to Wonderground, the annual workshop that invites children to be "child scientists" for a day. Facilitated by JMU Biology Professor Dr. Morgan Steffen, this October program teaches attendees to use high-powered microscopes to examine soil samples from the Arboretum grounds. As they view and identify the bacteria in soil, children begin to uncover the makeup of healthy soil: a living, dynamic substance. Hands-on experiences like Wonderground spark interest in and appreciation for the natural world at a young age.

The annual Children's Harvest Festival on October 21 is another Arboretum event connecting children to the outdoors. Families are invited to this free outdoor event that provides a dozen educational stations. Children will walk the Arboretum grounds harvesting tree seeds and nuts to feed baby squirrels and black bear cubs at the Wildlife Center of Virginia;

interact with live animals like rabbits and frogs; make fall crafts from natural materials to celebrate the season; participate in scavenger hunts to identify trees and insects; search for salamanders in the forest; and, of course, take carriage rides through the fall leaves. In between stations, children can learn a few dance moves from JMU clubs, participate in an interactive "autumn" music area with local band, Brother Chicory, and enjoy a snack of freshly-picked apples grown here in the Shenandoah Valley.

The Arboretum hopes that the children enjoying these nature experiences today become adults acting as caregivers of the environment in the future. We are grateful for the community's support of our Arboretum programs that immerse children at a young age in the beauty and mystery of the outdoors.

By Nichole Barrows
Education Coordinator



Children at the Wonderground workshop get up close and personal with the microscopic life of the Arboretum.



An Artist's Vision Comes to Life

A new piece of art depicting all four seasons is gracing the Arboretum's Pavilion wall courtesy of artist-in-residence Martha Crider Henderson. The elaborate mural, which has features including a bridge and a Great Blue Heron, covers the inside wall of the Pavilion. Martha painted this piece beginning in April and through July, with a final coat of protection applied in August.

"Elements like the bridge are necessary to describe the location. I need three man-made subjects," Martha said. Aside from the bridge, the scene includes a soaring kite and some snow-dusted steps, giving the season-centered work a wink of winter.

"Living subjects, the birds and insects, need to be enlarged and up front. The children who visited me while I worked had great fun telling me what I was painting."

Martha also discussed why it was important that the mural went in the area that it did, which used to be less colorful. "I cannot compete with nature and her many shades of green displayed in the Arboretum. I must see more colors," Martha said. "The leaves reflect the sky blues, but most visitors miss this reflection. Sunlight might be values of yellow. Van Gogh believed in yellow. I like exciting colors which bring joy. The yellow shapes create balance and help keep the eye on the mural. The space is no longer a dark and grey place."

Public reaction to the mural has been wonderfully positive. Martha noticed two teenagers who walked by it, one of them saying, "Hey man, this is good," while an elderly gentleman noticed that Martha had painted around the lock on the storage room door to make it look like a part of the bridge. Martha is eager, and prepared, for other opinions of her art.

"I'm waiting on reactions from the local art world," Martha said. "My journey with the Washington Landscape Society, the American Impression Society and my non-stop painting experiences have prepared me for any reactions."

As for the opinion of the artist herself, Martha had the following to say, "I look at the mural now knowing I gave it soul," Martha said. "This journey was of exceptional value because I took it on at 81 years of age. I have always believed an artist should leave a footprint. I observe the mural now and think of changes I would most likely make. Overall I am amazed and think, I did that!"

The mural too has had an impact on her as an artist, intensifying her desire to further leave her mark. "We hear about making a bucket list," Martha said. "I have one more item on my list: I would like to do another mural." On your next visit to the Arboretum be sure to stroll over to the Pavilion and step inside to view the golden glow emerging from within.

By Mike Dolzer, Volunteer Writer



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 appreciate your
 support! Click
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 to the Arboretum.**

Welcoming a New Arboretum Board Chair, Don Showalter

Don Showalter stepped up to fill the position of Arboretum Board Chair in May 2017 when Dr. Ron Carrier stepped down from a loyal and generous period of serving the Arboretum. Don is a founding member of the Arboretum Advisory Board and thus has served the Arboretum for many years already. In this new role he became engaged early on by sharing his vision with the Director and staff by introducing the team to Brick House Nursery, a new wholesale nursery in Luray, VA. Arboretum staff took a trip this summer to visit and see the wonderful variety of specimen trees and shrubs available there.

By day Don practices law at Wharton Aldhizer & Weaver in Harrisonburg, VA, where he has worked for 52 years and was a partner there for 44 years. Any other time he is busy as plant collector extraordinaire and has a full-spectrum love for plants, from dwarf conifers to boxwood, roses, rhododendrons, and rare trees. He grows daffodils, tulips and hosta by the thousands and he credits Board member Andre' Viette for introducing him to perennials, and, with it, a love for daylilies. There's even a tetraploid daylily named after Don's wife, Marlene's Delight, bred and registered by Andre' Viette, which is, of course, Don's favorite daylily.

“God Almighty first planted a garden; it is the purest of human pleasures; it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man...”

- Frances Bacon

Don gardens on his four acres in Broadway, VA, where he has expanded his collection each year for the last 50 years. When he takes a break from work and home, he travels to visit gardens across the U.S., coast to coast, and as far as England and Scotland. Don is immersed in the realm of plants and loves to talk about his latest discoveries, plants and gardens.

His vision for the Arboretum is to bring additional parking to the gardens; a strategy to deal with the perennial flooding that occurs in the most highly visited area, the pond; and an expansion of the botanical lecture series that brings notable horticultural speakers to the valley once a year. He is also familiar with the Arboretum's revised master plan that serves as guidance for future improvements and new developments.

The Arboretum welcomes Don Showalter and envisions that the marriage of his considerable expertise in legal matters with his passion for horticulture will serve the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum well moving forward.

*By Jan Sievers Mahon
Director*



Marlene's Delight daylily

Calendar Events

Fall Plant and Bulb Sale

Friday, September 22 - Saturday, Sept. 30
(*except Sunday*) 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Shop choice spring bulbs, and natives, plants, shrubs and trees at the Frances Plecker Education Center. Fall is the best time of year for planting shrubs and trees! Purchases can be paid by cash, check or charge, and support Harrisonburg's favorite arboretum and gardens.

En Plein Air Sessions

Fridays, September 22, October 6 & 20
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Artists are invited to bring their supplies and paint in the open air beauty of the Arboretum with renowned impressionist and muralist painter, Martha Crider Henderson. Sessions are free and open to all skill levels. Meet in the pavilion before going on site. *Online registration.*

Community Yoga with The Nest Yoga and Fitness Studio

Saturdays, September 30, October 7, 14 & 21
8:30 am — 9:30 am

Grab your mat, some water, and a towel and join the instructors at The Nest for an hour of yoga on the lawn. If lawn conditions are too wet, then yoga meets on the Ernst Terrace. *Register in advance online at www.thenestyoga.org.*

Community Tai Chi

Fridays, October 6 - November 10
12:30 pm

Join Tai Chi instructor Grayson Pritchard, of Blue Heron Healing Arts, for community Tai Chi. Advanced registration is recommended due to limited class sizes. Meet on the lawn by the pond. In case of inclement weather, meet under the pavilion. For more information, call (540) 999 - 8823. \$60 for six sessions, or \$12 per session. *Online registration.*

Wonderground Children's Workshop (FULL)

Friday, October 6
12:00 - 1:00 pm

Be a child scientist for the day with JMU Biology professor Dr. Morgan Steffen by collecting and then examining soil samples from the Arboretum grounds. Elementary school age children will learn how to use a microscope to view and identify the bacteria in soil. Healthy soil is a living, dynamic substance. Come discover what may be living in it! Meet in at the Frances Plecker Education Center.

Remarkable Trees Field Trip

Saturday, October 21
8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Staunton's parks are rich with history and amazing deciduous and conifer trees planted for Arbor Day in the 1800's. Tour these well-protected legacy trees in Gypsy Hill and Montgomery Hall Park. Visit a privately owned grand, aging Copper Beech tree downtown, and purchase lunch at Byers Street Bistro. Wear suitable clothing for outdoor weather and bring water. Meet in the parking lot at the Frances Plecker Education Center. \$15 *online registration.*

[Click here to register online](#)

Calendar Events

Children's Harvest Festival

Saturday, October 21
11:00 am - 2:00 pm

The Gus Bus, the JMU Duke Dog, and local musicians join together with the Arboretum for a free, educational, outdoor festival on our grounds. Enjoy a carriage ride and a snack of fresh apples, harvest tree seeds and nuts to be used in plantings. Build a fairy house in the woods, make a fall craft to take home, learn a few dance moves, pet farm animals, and stop by the children's music station to learn songs about this wonderful season!

Fall Color Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides

Sunday, October 22
1:00 - 4:00 pm

Enjoy the Arboretum's fall color beauty with a horse-drawn carriage ride. Prices and detailed information will be posted online. Call (540) 568-3194 to reserve either by carriage or seat for adults and children. Rides board at the Frances Plecker Education Center.

Blue Ridge PRISM's Fall/Winter Invasive Plant Training

Wednesday, October 25
1:00 - 5:00 pm

Learn how to identify and manage invasive plants species during fall and winter. Session includes a plant walk and management demonstration, plant samples on display, an equipment demonstration, and a plant ID clinic; bring your mystery plants to be identified. Wear suitable clothing and shoes for outdoor weather and walking. \$30, [register through Eventbrite](#).



Growing Gourmet and Medicinal Mushrooms

Wednesday, November 8
1:00 - 4:30 pm

Join Mark Jones, from Sharondale Farm, to learn how to grow different types of specialty mushrooms in your garden or woodlot. Discussions include biology and ecology of fungi, mushroom use for personal and ecological health, and methods for cultivating shiitake, oyster, lion's mane, and reishi in wood, straw and, compost. Prepare to grow your own with a hands-on mushroom log activity. Meet at the Frances Plecker Education Center. Dress accordingly for outdoors. \$15, [online registration](#).

Visit the EJC Arboretum Today!

Grounds are open free to the public, dawn to dusk, 365 days a year. The Frances Plecker Education Center is open 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on weekdays, except holidays.

(540) 568-3194, fax (540) 568-5115
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<http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/>



Fall foliage in the Arboretum