

SPRING 2016

DON WILLIAMSON

gardentimes

NEWSLETTER OF LEWIS GINTER BOTANICAL GARDEN



PHOTO CREDITS PAGE 2

Celebrate Spring!

A Million Blooms!

Starts March 26

BUTTERFLIES LIVE!

Starts April 15

Nature Connects®: Art with LEGO® Bricks

Starts May 27

Details inside and at lewisginter.org.

Message from the Executive Director



2

editor's box

The *Garden Times* newsletter is mailed three times a year to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden members.

Volume XXXI, Number 1

executive director
Shane Tippett

newsletter editor
Lynn Kirk

design
Elevation

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

earned Charity Navigator's Top 4-Star Rating for exceptional financial management.



Gratitude

We may be thankful for many things in a garden, but not everything. Under the “thankful for” heading: the blazing color of spring bloom, the annual return of flirty butterflies and the shift of seasons from gentle spring to sultry summer. “Not thankful for”: boxwood blight and periodic drought. Benedictine monk and author David Steindl-Rast reminds us that while we might not be thankful for everything we are given, we can be thankful in every moment and the opportunities each moment presents. It has been a privilege to work at a garden where so many volunteers, staff, members and patrons exhibit the quality of living thankfully.

Some images come readily to mind:

A volunteer cheerfully pulls weed after weed, freeing up a bed of brilliant daffodils while his joints gently pop like little hands applauding every time he rises from his kneeling pad. A colleague with a huge smile on her face welcomes a guest to the butterfly exhibit, asks a quick question, provides a helpful response, and then does that again and again, scores of times on a steamy afternoon. A member with a cane beams with joy about a newly encountered conifer on a hot summer day, taking the time to thank gardeners and volunteers and the young cashier in the Garden Cafe for the discovery, when even walking is a challenge for him.

It has been my experience that the generosity of patrons is often rooted in an attitude of thankfulness. Many embrace the experiences and gifts of life with a grateful air, eager to share their commitment and their passion. The Louise B. Cochrane Rose Garden was supported by and named for an engaging woman who passionately loved roses. She saw, and in her art frequently conveyed, their delicate shape and tantalizing color. This May, as the bloom returns to her garden at Lewis Ginter, we can be thankful for her life, even as we sorrowed at her passing this past December. In that hard moment, we were reminded how much lives spent in celebration mean to us. In that moment we were grateful for such lives.

Shane Tippett
Executive Director

COVER PHOTO CREDITS

(top row, left to right) Don Williamson, Jonah Holland, Don Williamson; (2nd row) Scott Elmquist, Sean Kenney Studios, Don Williamson; (third row) Don Williamson, Scott Elmquist, Don Williamson.

Special Events & Exhibits

Details at lewisginter.org and facebook.com/lewisginter.
* Free for members and included with Garden admission.

Nature Connects®: Art with LEGO® Bricks

COMING SOON!



SPECIAL EXHIBIT*

MAY 27–SEPTEMBER 18

Artistic wonder. Award winner. Record breaker. The upcoming Nature Connects exhibition, set outdoors in the gardens, is all this and more! See 14 displays

of playful, larger-than-life sculptures crafted from nearly half-a-million colorful LEGO bricks. Discover how the imaginative artworks illustrate nature's connections. And hear fun facts about LEGOs, which families have enjoyed since 1932.



LEGO USERS TRAIN SHOW*

MAY 27–29 (ONLY)
KELLY EDUCATION CENTER, CLASSROOM 2 & LIBRARY

To kick off the summer-

long Nature Connects exhibit, the Garden will host visiting LEGO User Groups (LUGs) from Washington, D.C., Virginia and Pennsylvania. See their amazing exhibit of electric trains chugging past buildings, farms, gardens and other remarkable scenes—all made with LEGO bricks!

VirginiaFIRST ROBOT DEMO DAY*

MAY 28 (ONLY) Updates at lewisginter.org.

Related children's activities page 9. Related group tour details page 11.



Butterflies LIVE!*

OPENS APRIL 15

Exotic and native butterflies entertain with stunning colors, amazing antics and fun facts. This year, monarchs and luna moths also join the show!

Meet the Butterflies
at <http://bit.ly/MeetBflies>.

New!

See <http://bit.ly/InstaBloom> for Instagram contests and related Spring PlantFest offerings.



Les Papillons dans le Jardin

Friday, April 15, 6:30PM

*Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's Annual Fundraising Gala,
hosted by the Board of Directors.*

*Splendor is a special invitation-only event
for Patrons who give at the Sponsor Level and above.
For more information, contact Susan Leighton at
(804) 262-9887, ext. 334 or susanl@lewisginter.org.*

Proceeds benefit the Garden's mission of education and our passion to connect people and plants to improve our community.

1800 Lakeside Avenue • Richmond, VA 23228-4700



Special Evening Event for Garden Week

APRIL 27 (ONLY), 5–9PM

Enjoy extended hours and entertainment on Wed., April 27 (only):

- Historic Bloemendaal House tours*, 5–8PM
- Casual fare, wine & beer (\$) at Bloemendaal House, 5–8PM
- Live music* by The Triple Crossing Jazz Project Trio, 6–8PM
- Garden Shop, 10AM–7PM with 15% discount for members (only)

Non-members save \$1 on (1) Garden admission with 2016 Garden Week ticket. Butterflies LIVE! closes 5PM daily due to butterflies' reduced activity.

Horticulture



Garden Explorer New!

With the newly introduced Garden Explorer website, you can explore the Garden in depth—on-site or virtually from anywhere in the world! Using a web browser on a PC, tablet computer or smartphone, a virtual visitor can access:

- Satellite maps of the property
- A database of detailed information about our plants and collections
- Searches for plants via common and scientific name

Visitors can pinpoint their location on the map, making it easier to navigate the Garden. In the future, users will be able to search for Garden features, such as memorial benches and trees. They also will be able to participate in self-guided Garden tours (even virtually) that highlight plants of seasonal and thematic interest.

Try it yourself! Log on to <http://bit.ly/GardenExplorer> and please share this news so others can enjoy Garden Explorer, too!

This software enhancement is made possible through a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust.

In Process: Marion Morton New! Native Plant Garden

If you noticed a bit of unusual activity on the west side of the Kelly Education Center this past fall and winter, you weren't alone.

4 What you were witnessing was the birth of an exciting new garden at Lewis Ginter.

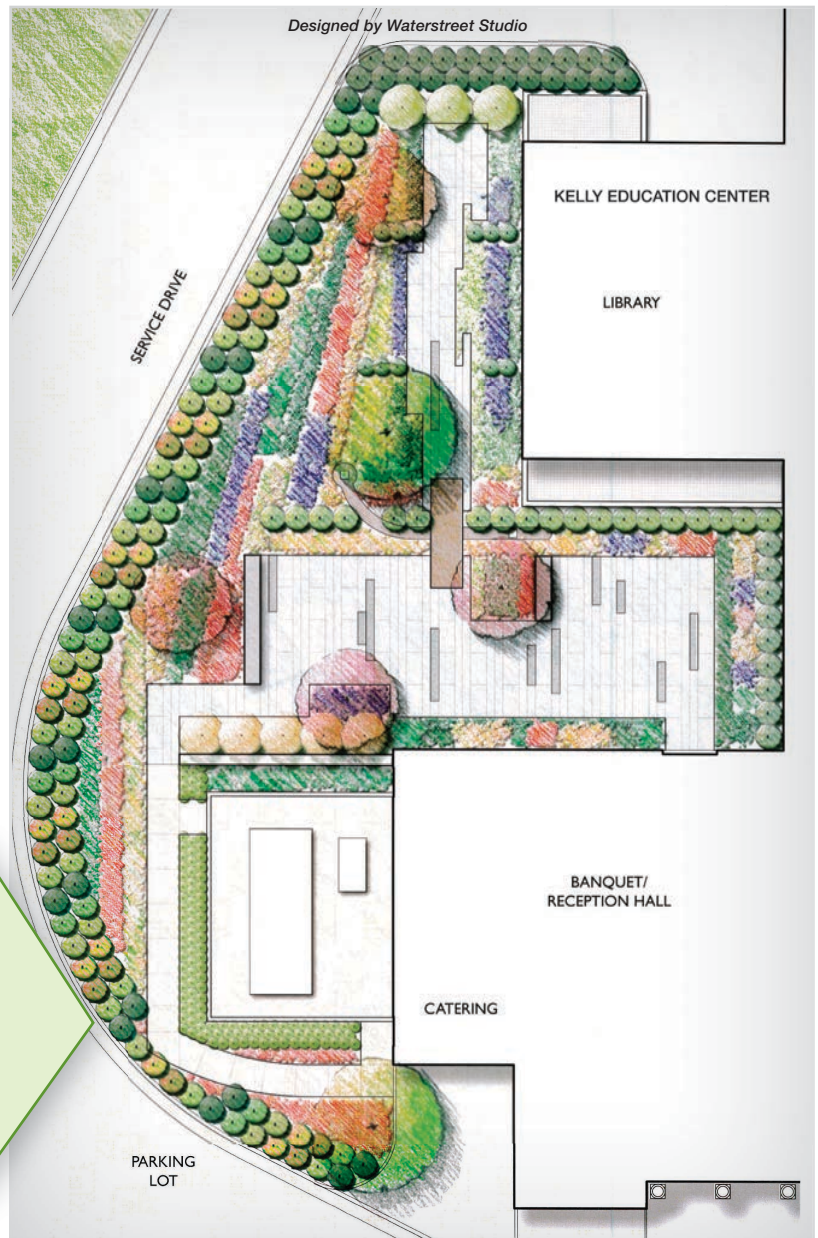
Once planting is completed this spring and fall, the Marion Morton Native Plant Garden will showcase the beauty and utility of native trees, understory shrubs and perennials. The Garden is perhaps best appreciated from the inside of the Lora M. Robins Library, where it will offer a picturesque view of sustainable residential-scale horticulture. It also is accessible on a limited basis to visitors via the Auditorium for facility rentals and as part of education classes.

The project allows for the removal of 5,300 sq. ft. of traditional turf and features a number of replicable best practices, including drip irrigation, rooftop rainwater capture and drought-tolerant native plantings. The plantings also provide valuable habitat and food for insects and birds, encouraging a more robust local ecosystem. The design incorporates a new event terrace, creating a highly desirable rental space. Even the hardscape showcases Virginia native materials and sustainability, from bluestone and granite pavers to a black locust bridge made from reclaimed lumber.

The Marion Morton Native Plant Garden is made possible through a bequest from the estate of Marion N.W. Morton, a grant from the Windsor Foundation and a gift from a private donor.

Why Native Plants?

- Eliminate or greatly reduce the need for irrigation, excess fertilization and pesticides
- Improve water quality by absorbing and filtering stormwater before it carries sediment and pollutants to streams and rivers
- Support the local ecosystem as both food and habitat for insect/animal populations
- Come in a variety of appealing colors, sizes and textures



Bright Spots

march



Crocus
Crocus tommasinianus 'Ruby Giant'

april



Red Hot Poker
Kniphofia uvaria

may



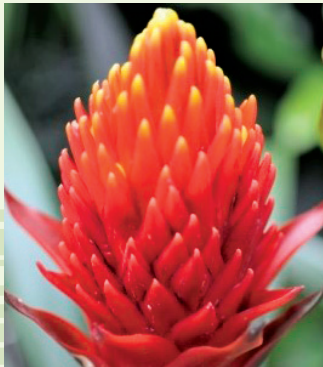
Rose
Rosa

trees



Lacebark Pine
Pinus bungeana

conservatory



Bromeliad
Aechmea zebrina



Serving Our Community

During 2015, the Community Kitchen Garden delivered 7,009 pounds of fresh and nourishing vegetables to FeedMore, equating to 28,036 meals! Many thanks to the 361 volunteers who donated more than 1,500 hours to help with the planting, nurturing and harvesting.

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A \$10 donation
can provide one free class for a
low-to-moderate-income student.

SPRING PLANTFEST

(formerly Spring Plant Sale)

FRIDAY, MAY 6.....9AM-5PM

SATURDAY, MAY 79AM-3PM

PARKING LOT C

Our annual salute to gardening is just in time for **Mother's Day!** Nowhere else will you find such an abundance of plants, creative container plantings and distinctive decoratives for outdoor settings. At the Bloemendaal's Best tent, check out the native milkweed varieties, as well as the butterfly kits with nectar and host plants. Browse the collections and gather tips from knowledgeable growers. Also bring your garden tools, kitchen knives and scissors for honing by Mr. Leonard's Sharpening Service. \$.

- Live music by local artists and food and beverage offerings. \$.
- Meet and greet your Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent.
Open free to the public. Bring a friend and make it a spring outing!

Regular Garden admission to enter the Garden.
Presented by Garden volunteers.



march



March Madness

DAILY THROUGH THURSDAY, 31

Garden members (only) enjoy 15% discount on purchases in Garden Shop & Cafe all month. Also in Tea House when it reopens March 16.



Peek-a-Bloom with Peter Rabbit

SATURDAY, 26 & SUNDAY, 27

BOTH DAYS.....1-4PM
PETER RABBIT GREET VISITORS & POSES FOR PHOTOS*

SATURDAY ONLY2-3PM
CONCERT BY THE RICHMOND
CONCERT BAND* AT BLOEMENDAAL

SUNDAY ONLY10AM-3PM
TEA HOUSE BRUNCH
*Reservations required, (804) 262-9887, ext. 329
(began March 1); regular Garden admission.*

A Million Blooms*

DAILY, MARCH 26-JUNE 1.....9AM-5PM
Succession of glorious spring blooms!

Annual Spring Forward Volunteer Event

THURSDAY, MARCH 31.....5:30PM
KELLY EDUCATION CENTER, AUDITORIUM
Business meeting & dinner for volunteers and (1) guest.

RSVP to volunteer@lewisginter.org
or call (804) 262-9887, ext. 335 by March 25.

april



A Million Blooms*

DAILY-JUNE 1.....9AM-5PM
Details in March.

Virginia Daffodil Society Show*

SATURDAY, 2.....2-5PM
SUNDAY, 3.....10AM-3:45PM
KELLY EDUCATION CENTER
Delightful prize-worthy daffodils & expert growers.

Ginter in the Morning

TUESDAY, 5.....10-11AM
Fantastic Flowering Bulbs
Specialized walk, featuring seasonal aspects, enhances understanding of the Garden.
*Monthly except January, July, August.
Free/member; \$16/non-member.
Pre-registration required at lewisginter.org.*



Richmond African Violet Society Show* & Sale

SALE: FRIDAY, 8.....1-5PM
SATURDAY, 9.....9AM-5PM
SUNDAY, 10.....9AM-4PM

SHOW: SATURDAY, 9.....1-5PM
SUNDAY, 10.....9AM-4PM
VISITORS CENTER ATRIUM
& ROBINS ROOM
Interesting & unusual African violets on display & for purchase.
*Open free to the public.
Regular Garden admission.*

Butterflies LIVE!*

DAILY, APRIL 15-OCTOBER 9.....9AM-5PM
CONSERVATORY NORTH WING
Native & tropical butterflies delight, educate & entertain.

april *continued*

Seasonal Opening of WaterPlay*

SATURDAY, 16
CHILDREN'S GARDEN
Weather permitting.

Special Evening Event for Garden Week

WEDNESDAY, 27 (ONLY)UNTIL 9PM
Details page 3.

Splendor

LES PAPILLONS DANS LE JARDIN
FRIDAY, 156:30PM
By invitation.
*Presented by Lewis Ginter Board of Directors.
Details page 3.*

APRIL CALENDAR NOTE:

*Heritage Weekend moves to August 27-28,
as the Late Summer Lawn Party.
Details in Garden Times' summer issue.*

may



Butterflies LIVE!*

DAILY, THROUGH OCTOBER 9.....9AM-5PM
CONSERVATORY NORTH WING
Details in April.

Ginter in the Morning

TUESDAY, 3.....10-11AM
Embracing Native Plants for new displays.
Details in April.

MAY 6-8 WEEKEND

Spring PlantFest (FORMERLY SPRING PLANT SALE)

FRIDAY, 6.....9-5PM
SATURDAY, 7.....9AM-3PM
PARKING LOT C
Details page 5.

National Public Gardens Day*

FRIDAY, 6
Celebrate the beauty & benefits of public gardens9AM-5PM
Historic Bloemendaal House
open for tours by knowledgeable
Garden Guides11AM-3PM

may *continued*

MAY 6-8 WEEKEND *continued*



Mother's Day Weekend Celebration

FRIDAY, 6-SUNDAY, 8

Three-day extended celebration honors mothers & important caregivers.

SATURDAY, 7-SUNDAY, 8 10AM-4PM
Create a memory for mom: read together on the Terrace Lawn, explore woodland walks, weave a Maypole & more!
Food available in Garden Cafe. \$.

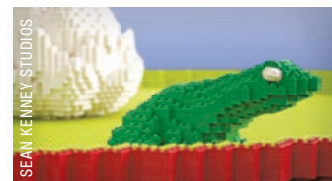
SUNDAY ONLY:

MAKE-AND-TAKES FOR MOM*10AM-4PM
CHILDREN'S GARDEN

SPECIAL BRUNCH 10AM-3PM
LORA ROBINS TEA HOUSE. \$.
*Reservations required (began March 1),
(804) 262-9887, ext. 329.*

À LA CARTE DININGNOON-3PM
BLOEMENDAAL LAWN. \$.

FREE CONCERT*1-4PM
BLOEMENDAAL HOUSE LAWN
With Glennroy Bailey & Co.
*Lawn chairs and blankets are welcome,
but no outside food and beverage.
Regular Garden admission.*



Nature Connects®: Art with LEGO® Bricks

FRIDAY, 27-SEPTEMBER 18
THROUGHOUT THE GARDEN
Details page 3.

Richmond Rose Society Show*

SATURDAY, 28.....1-4PM
SUNDAY, 29 11AM-3:30PM
KELLY EDUCATION CENTER, AUDITORIUM
Specimen rose displays & consulting experts.

EXHIBITS

Watercolors from the Highgrove Florilegium*

APRIL 1–30

KELLY EDUCATION CENTER,
LORA M. ROBINS LIBRARY

Botanical paintings from the garden of HRH The Prince of Wales.

Pinwheels for Prevention Garden*

APRIL 2–30

TERRACED LAWN NEAR ROSE GARDEN

3,000+ pinwheels for children served this past year by Prevent Child Abuse Virginia's Healthy Families program.

Recognizing Child Abuse Prevention Month.

GINTER GALLERY II*

Reichenbachia: 19th Century Botanical Illustrations of Orchids

MARCH 20–APRIL 13

Deborah Davis: Moths Up Close

APRIL 20–MAY 22



Brian Korte: Botanical Mosaics with LEGO® Bricks

MAY 27–SEPTEMBER 18

Piece by piece, artist Brian Korte of Brickworkz LLC creates elaborate worlds with his mosaics made from LEGO pieces.

*In the Lora M. Robins Library:
Interactive mosaic-building
station, where visitors create their
own mosaics. Fun for all!**

Adult Education



The seasonal schedule is posted at lewisginter.org/learn/adult-classes, mailed to members and published in the "Style Weekly" April 6 insert. A few highlights follow with details, fees & registration for each at lewisginter.org.

Tree Care Symposium Getting to Big Trees: Practices for Life Stages

TUESDAY, MARCH 298:30AM–4PM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 308:30AM–12:30PM

Two-day symposium looks at practices that ensure trees reach a healthy maturity and a long life span. From soils to maintenance, Tuesday introduces new strategies, evaluates current practices and provides information to share with developers and homeowners. Wednesday, hear additional lectures or participate in demonstrations like stationary rope climbing. \$. *Adult workshop.*

Plants for Spring

SATURDAY, APRIL 239–11AM

Garden horticulturist Dean Dietrich discusses reliable, interesting plants that provide ongoing interest as the seasons change. Also tips for selecting, placing, planting and caring for these plants, plus 'the dark side'—problems common to them. Includes tour to see mature examples in place. \$.

Spring Hours



Garden

Daily: 9AM–5PM

April 27 of Historic Garden Week:
9AM–9PM

Garden Shop

Monday–Saturday: 10AM–5PM

Sunday: NOON–5PM

April 27 of Historic Garden Week:
10AM–7PM

Dining

Garden Cafe

Daily: 10AM–4PM

Lora Robins Tea House

Reopens March 16

Wednesday–Sunday:

11:30AM–2:30PM

Reservations,

(804) 262-9887, ext. 399

Garden Admission **FREE**
for Garden members.

Membership info and visitor
prices at lewisginter.org.

Donor support

enabled 7,118 people to attend
CarMax Free Fourth of July 2015.

Children's Garden

*Free for members and included with Garden admission.
Details at lewisginter.org.



KRISTIN THOROMAN

Drop-in Activities*

DAILY, APRIL–OCTOBER

GARDEN DISCOVERY BREEZEWAY

Discover nature's mysteries through Kid Quest and other self-directed activities.

Girl Scout Programs

Scouts can complete requirements for these garden-related badges:

- Daisy Blue Bucket Award
- Brownie Bugs Badge
- Junior Flowers Badge
- Junior Gardener Badge

\$. Pre-registration required. Leaders, complete online form or call Children's Education Assistant at (804) 262-9887, ext. 322 for date availabilities.

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MARY MCCULLOUGH

WaterPlay*

OPENS APRIL 16 (Weather Permitting)

Schedule and tips at lewisginter.org.

Volunteer!

Children's Garden opportunities page 10.

Party Time?

Ever-popular birthday party package is available select Saturdays, April–October, for children ages 5–12. Contact the Children's Education Assistant at (804) 262-9887, ext. 322.



KRISTIN THOROMAN



Green Adventure Summer Camps

JUNE–AUGUST, WEEK-LONG SESSIONS, 9AM–NOON

School's out, outdoor fun's in! Campers learn about the plant kingdom and their connections to it through field studies, garden games, keepsake crafts, botanical snacks and loads of outdoor fun!

\$. Pre-registration required. Limited space.

Ages 4–5

Growing Mr. McGregor's Garden
June 20–24 or July 18–22

Bricks and Sticks
July 5–8 or August 1–5

New!

Ages 6–7

Garden Safari
June 27–July 1

Garden Safari
August 8–12

Ages 8–9

Wild about Bugs
July 11–15

New!

Ages 10–12

Nature Expeditions
July 25–29

New!

Green Adventure Spring Break Workshops: Stop-Motion Animation

FOUR ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS, 9AM–3:30PM

Lights, camera, action! Using the Garden as a backdrop, develop a storyline, create scenes and props using natural materials, and snap images to produce a nature-based stop-motion animation film, including digital access to the finished product.

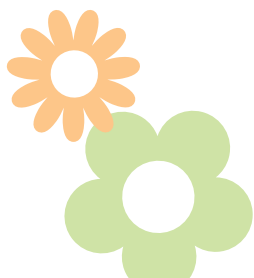
\$. Pre-registration required.

Ages 4+ (adult/child)
March 26

Ages 6–8
March 28

Ages 9–12
March 30

Ages 13–17
April 1





“Lewis Ginter
+ LEGOs?!?!
Yet another reason
to love LG.”

— HANNAH WHISENANT,
MOTHER OF THREE YOUNG CHILDREN



Donations help
provide free classes for 3,000+
low-to-moderate-income
students each year.

LEGO® Brick Stop-Motion Animation

Lights, camera, action! Using the Garden as a backdrop, children develop a storyline, create scenes and props using natural materials, and snap images of the LEGO mini-figures as they complete an outdoor adventure. Participants also have digital access to their stop-motion animation film to share with friends and family.
\$. Pre-registration required.

WEEK-LONG CAMPS

MONDAY–FRIDAY, 9AM–NOON

Ages 6–8 | June 20–24 or August 1–5
Ages 9–12 | June 27–July 1 or August 15–19

ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS

9AM–3:30PM

Adult/child session | July 23 or August 13
Ages 13–17 | August 11

LEGO Mosaics: Art in Nature

Using the summer garden as inspiration, campers design and build nature-themed mosaics, including one group piece for display at the Garden. \$. Pre-registration required.

WEEK-LONG CAMPS

MONDAY–FRIDAY, 9AM–NOON

Ages 7–9 | July 18–22
Ages 10–12 | August 8–12



Additional butterfly sightings in the Butterfly Meadow, as well as the Certified Monarch Waystation in the Children's Garden.

Butterflies LIVE!*

OPENS APRIL 15
CONSERVATORY NORTH WING
Details page 3.

Help Grow the Garden



New Membership Program

Exciting new membership benefits will be unveiled this spring! The new membership program will enable you to choose your desired level of engagement, while enjoying one-of-a-kind opportunities, special invitations and unique access to the Garden.

New benefit choices include:

- **Customized membership** with updates on your selected interest track
- Invitations to **private dinners** with Garden guest speakers
- Invitation to an **exclusive off-site party**
- Invitations to **opening-night receptions** for Garden special exhibits or events

Details will follow by mail and will be posted at <http://bit.ly/MEMBERSHIP>.

Thank You, Annual Fund Donors

As a nonprofit, we rely heavily on Annual Fund donations to carry out our educational mission. Your donation helps connect people and plants to improve the community. Your Annual Fund gift also enables us to:

- Maintain the Garden's renowned botanical displays, including new additions, such as the Edible Display Garden and the Ornamental Grass Garden in front of the Conservatory.
- Sustain education programs for thousands of children and adults each year.
- Support outreach programs like the Community Kitchen Garden, which provides thousands of pounds of fresh vegetables to FeedMore's Meals on Wheels and Kids Cafe programs each year.

Please support the Garden's Annual Fund today at giving.lewisginter.org.

Volunteer: Fun with Purpose

Our mission is education and our passion is connecting people and plants to improve the community. We'd love your help! Whether you volunteer indoors or out, you will learn something new, meet interesting people and make a difference in your community.

ADULTS: Various opportunities
Various hours/days of the week | year-round

TEENS (13-18): Two summer opportunities in the Children's Garden

Youth Volunteer Program

Tuesday-Thursday | June 21-August 25, 9AM-NOON

Summer Camp Volunteer

Monday-Friday, Select Weeks | June-August, 8:45AM-NOON

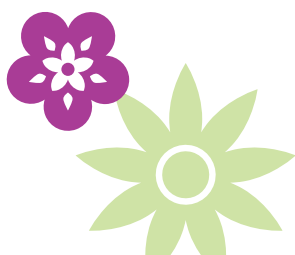
FAMILIES: Various opportunities in the Children's Garden
Select Sunday mornings | April-October

Pre-registration required.

Details and applications at <http://bit.ly/VOLUNT33R>.



The Garden appreciates the valuable gift offered by all of our volunteers:
the gift of time.



More Ways to Enjoy



Making Connections: Sculptures from LEGO® Bricks, Group Tour

AVAILABLE MAY 27–SEPTEMBER 18

Join your expert Guide for a tour of discovery, and experience the 14 displays of playful sculptures crafted from nearly half-a-million colorful LEGO bricks. Hear fun facts about the toy shared across generations as you enjoy making connections in the growing garden. Find out how the 60-pound bumblebee and 6-foot bison both illustrate stories of relationships in nature. Get some behind-the-scenes information to make your tour complete. To register your group call (804) 262-9887, ext. 320.

\$. Available during regular Garden hours for groups of 15 or more adults. Two-week advance registration requested. Related information page 3.



Facility Rental = Free Access to Garden + Exhibits

Enjoy Nature Connects® and Butterflies LIVE! during your next special event! By hosting your social or professional gathering at the Garden during the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., you and your guests will receive free Garden admission, including the special events and exhibits occurring during your event. What a value!

Details at <http://bit.ly/FacilityRental>. Facility Rental experts at (804) 262-9887, ext. 224 or 345 or facilityevents@lewisginter.org.

Admissions

cover only a small portion of our expenses. Members and donors, thank you for your support!

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Add a 'WOW' factor to your landscape with Beadworx handcrafted décor: brightly colored glass beads wired into imaginative creations.

Shoppers' Alert

A new season means new merchandise for yard and home! Browse the Garden Shop's ever-changing inventory to discover just what you need (and want!).

Reminder:

March Madness offers a 15% discount on member purchases in the Garden Shop now through March 31 (must show member ID).





Lewis Ginter
Botanical Garden

1800 LAKESIDE AVENUE
RICHMOND, VA 23228-4700
(804) 262-9887
lewisginter.org

Non-Profit
Organization
U S Postage
PAID
Permit 520
Richmond, VA



**“In the spring,
at the end of the
day, you should
smell like dirt.”**

— Margaret Atwood

Thanks for Our Awesome Awning!



Until recently, a drizzly day in the Children's Garden equaled wet kids, soggy chaperones and hastily reconfigured lesson plans.

“If the weather was bad enough, sometimes we even

had to cancel classes,” says Kelly Riley, Children's Education Manager. “Now we shouldn't have to worry as much.”

Kelly's savior is a new permanent awning for the Carriage House in the Children's Garden, which will provide students and families with welcome relief from spring rains and summer heat. The awning was provided by a donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, with a special connection to the Children's Garden.

“She's a teacher. In fact, she's a teacher who had actually taken her own classes to the Garden,” Kelly explains. The donor had an amount in mind and then met with Garden staff who told her what they needed most. At the top of the list was an awning large enough to facilitate year-round outdoor instruction that also included fans for relief from summer heat and lighting for evening events.

“The awning is amazing!” says Kelly. “It's going to make a world of difference in the comfort of our guests. It will make an underutilized space more active, with more opportunity for free play and self-guided activities.”

In the donor's own words: “It was important for me to meet with the staff, to make that personal connection and to hear first-hand their thoughts on the Children's Garden, its programs and how it was meeting the needs of the children in the Richmond community. I was very pleased, as a donor, with the entire process.”

Kelly adds: “Now I can't wait for it to rain!”