

# LEWIS GINTER SUMMER 2018

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# ROOTING FOR THE FUTURE

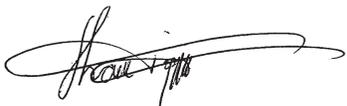
# FIRST WORDS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## MAKING SPACE

The young man in duck trousers and a company shirt had just finished off-loading the last of four ball-and-burlap pin oaks. As he busied himself latching up the tailgate of his truck, he chided me, “Remember, don’t put a dollar tree in a nickel hole.”

I have heard this admonition many times over the years. To allow plenty of space for the root ball while planting a tree seems like good advice, easily followed. Then I start digging. Admonition or not, I admit the first time I stop to measure the size of the hole I am seldom halfway done, and I am always disappointed. This business of making space can be hard work.

As I watch my colleagues lean into the mission of the Garden on a daily basis, I am struck by how cheerfully and competently they go about the hard work of making space for plants and people to root and flourish. The horticulturists manage it with the same professional ease with which they assess conditions of soil, water and light. The educators accomplish small wonders with young people of all abilities and backgrounds, one-on-one and through partnerships with schools like The Faison Center. The Ginter Urban Gardeners work in their own communities and we embrace our guests with a love of the natural world. We make space, for all our futures.



Shane Tippett  
*Executive Director*

## VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

Welcome to the new *Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Magazine*. We hope you’ll enjoy this valuable member benefit and the stories of people connecting through plants to improve communities.

## DESIGN

Elevation Advertising

## WRITING

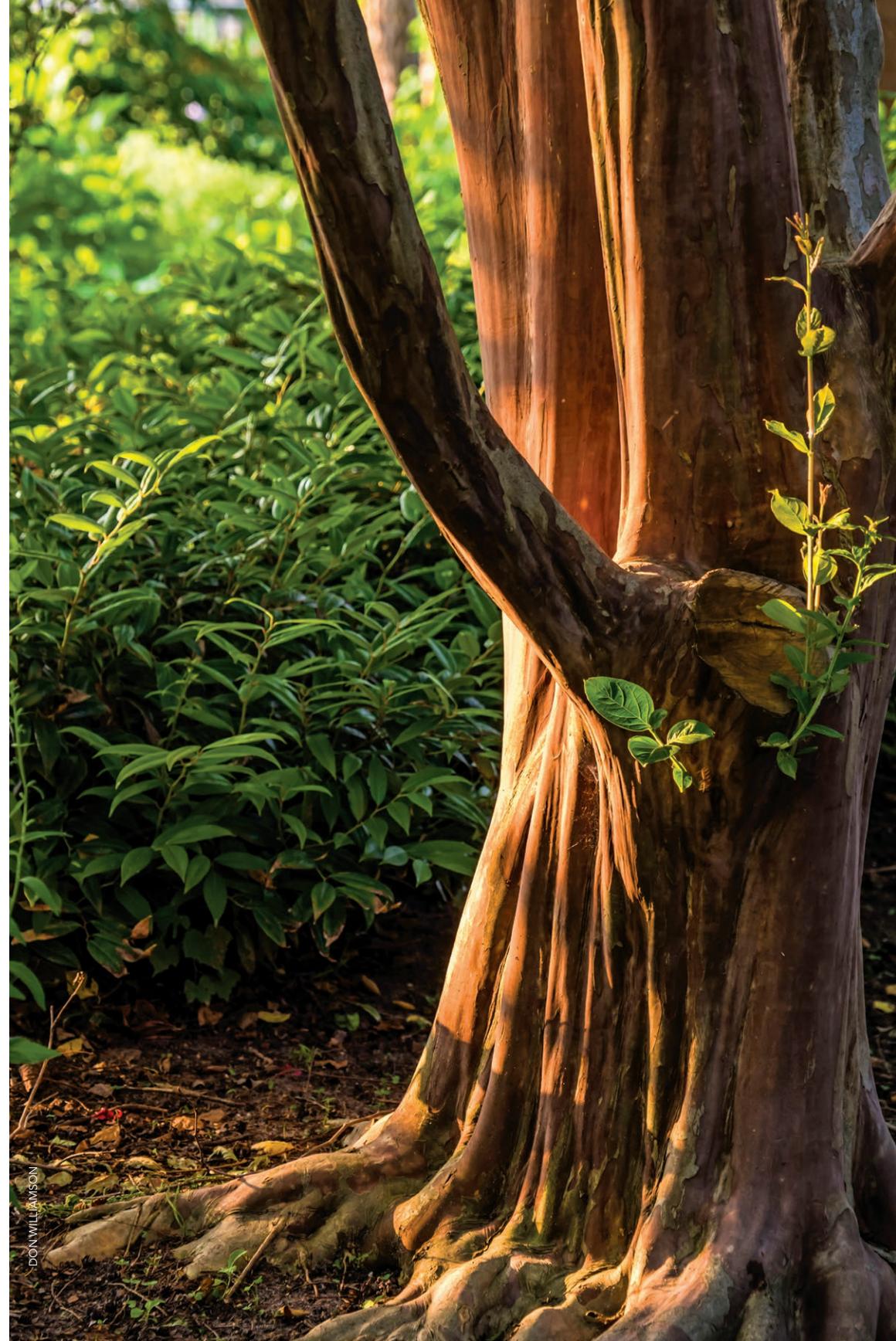
Lynn Kirk, Kirk Communications, with support from Garden staff and volunteers

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Craig Anderson

## QUESTIONS & COMMENTS?

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DON WILKINSON



# JOB SKILLS TAKE ROOT

CRAIG ANDERSON

It's 8:15 a.m. Like many 18-year-olds, Tristin Compton would love to spend his morning listening to music or watching videos on his iPad. Yet he also yearns for independence and a meaningful job. So, reminded of these goals, he boards a van that transports him to Lewis Ginter. On arrival, he clocks in and pins on his name badge. Then he confidently proceeds to the Children's Garden.

Tristin is an intern with The Faison Center's Employment Academy. The Academy aims to prepare individuals with autism, such as Tristin, for employment by building a range of skills applicable across a variety of career settings. The interns are given opportunities to work at community-partner locations across the region, including Lewis Ginter. The workday can be challenging for individuals with autism, but each is accompanied by an aide who assists while encouraging independence. Day by day, step by step, Tristin works toward achieving his long-term goals.

As Tristin approaches the Children's Garden, he sees a familiar face: Heather Veneziano, youth program developer. "Good morning, Ms. Heather," he says. Being able to work alongside staff and other volunteers at Lewis Ginter enables Tristin to practice social and communication skills in a real-world situation. "It's also his opportunity to integrate in the workplace culture," says Chris Morgan, program supervisor at the Academy. "He gets to know people and make friends."

Tristin and his aide review the day's assignments. The tasks aren't arbitrary;

they're matched to his interests and abilities. "The list is very fluid, so the interns learn new things and build good skills," Heather says. "We help them become work-ready by providing vocational services for workforce development."

Typically, Tristin helps prepare the Children's Garden for incoming guests—an assignment he takes seriously because it is his job. First, he collects toys buried in the sandbox and rakes the sand smooth. Next, he wipes down picnic tables, cleans signs or performs other operational tasks. Sometimes he fills soil bags for a future school group program, which supports his counting and organizational skills. Or, he pulls weeds and mulches garden beds. "The diversified experiences help him transition into employment, perhaps in horticulture or grounds maintenance," Chris says.

If Tristin becomes frustrated, which is not atypical for students with autism, his aide reminds him to use his coping skills and to communicate what he needs. Sometimes he needs to take a break and relax, or he needs help navigating a social situation with a peer.

*The Faison Center, a nonprofit educational and treatment center, serves individuals impacted by autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities.*

Once Tristin graduates from Lewis Ginter's 12-week internship, he rotates to another community partner. "Lewis Ginter has been a foundation of the Employment Academy," Chris says. "Without the Garden's partnership, we would not be able to help students achieve these goals."

Tristin's mom, Sheila, says the family moved to Virginia from Texas to support his education and opportunities. "We want him to achieve and live the best life he can," she said. "Tristin is not limited, as long as he believes in himself and others believe in him, as well. We couldn't feel more supported by Faison and the school's community partners, like Lewis Ginter."

*Tristin successfully completed his Lewis Ginter internship in 2017. He returned this past spring and helped train other interns.*

**Lewis Ginter is rooted in vocational partnerships that currently include:**

- Academy of Virginia Randolph School
- Dominion Waiver
- Faison Center Employment Academy
- Henrico County Cooperative Work Experience Program (7 high schools)
- Henrico Mental Health
- Northstar Career Academy
- Richmond Public Schools
- St. Joseph's Villa
- The Founders Center
- VCU School of Social Work (therapeutic horticulture program in development)



One of Tristin's responsibilities was preparing the Children's Garden for incoming guests.



CRAIG ANDERSON

# GRASSROOTS GARDENING

Cucumbers. Tomatoes. Strawberries and collards. Big plans are under way to infuse the community garden at Peter Paul Development Center (PPDC) in Richmond's Church Hill neighborhood.

Lakeshia Allen, a former engagement coordinator at PPDC and a Ginter Urban Gardener graduate, says, "I wanted residents to buy into their garden by creating the list of what we'll grow. I also want to show them they don't have to wait for food distribution to get fresh fruits and vegetables."

The neighborhood, in Richmond's East End, is characterized by the highest concentration of poverty in the city. During her tenure with PPDC, Lakeshia worked directly with food distribution, mainly from FeedMore, which occurs twice a month and reaches more than 700 individuals from the neighborhood. Lakeshia notes that sometimes it's barely enough food for a week.

"My hope is that those who come to food distribution will now grow their own vegetables and fruits...and take more ownership in the community garden," she says. "This bridge between food distribution and the garden's offerings will teach our community about living a healthy lifestyle. They'll also learn about healthy ways to use fresh food."

The Center's youth are already planning an ingenious use of the harvested collards: *healthy green smoothies!*

## URBAN GARDENING

In RVA, urban gardening is more than growing plants. It is substantive transformation. Community empowerment. And dedicated leaders partnering with communities to enhance food security, social justice and environmental wellbeing.

## TRANSFORMATIONS TAKE ROOT

In part, RVA's recent urban-gardening successes stem from graduates of Beautiful RVA's Ginter Urban Gardener program. These volunteer project leaders deploy their horticulture and community trust-building skills to help citizens work together to establish or improve upon community gardens and urban-greening initiatives. The training curriculum was developed by Duron Chavis, Lewis Ginter's community engagement coordinator. His culturally relevant approach focuses on racial equity and a philosophy of working with, not doing for, communities. He teaches Ginter Urban Gardeners how to empower communities, build authentic relationships and transform the environment in sustainable ways. "Greenspaces integrate people into a social fabric that creates unity and community pride," Duron says. Urban gardening also brings to life Lewis Ginter's vision of connecting people through plants to improve communities.



CRAIG ANDERSON

The Kroger Community Kitchen Garden at Lewis Ginter serves as an outdoor classroom for Ginter Urban Gardeners.



# THE BIG PICTURE

This tranquil image belies the buzz of activity that is the Children's Garden. From guests to school groups, and service learning programs to teacher workshops, children's education keeps us focused on what's important: the future.

TOM HENNESSY

## THE WORD ON BIRDS



Backyard birds often wander widely around our neighborhoods during summer, so it can seem that birdlife has diminished. Consider these tips to increase avian traffic in your backyard.

**Water:** Backyard birds need a source of water, especially during our hot, humid summers. Provide a birdbath and refill it often. A water drip in the birdbath also will attract birds.

**Seeds:** Backyard birds have a wider range of food sources during the summer, so whether you continue feeding them is a personal decision. However, readily available nourishment—such as sunflower seeds and a quality seed mix—is apt to attract more birds.

**Suet Cake:** Some backyard species, such as northern cardinals, house and Carolina wrens and mourning doves, have multiple broods during breeding season. Watch for harried parents attending to hungry chicks during summer months. They'll thank you for suet cake: a prized treat for their youngsters.

**Nectar:** Don't forget ruby-throated hummingbirds, usually a faithful mainstay in our backyards, who may appreciate a nectar-filled feeder. However, they may

bypass feeders altogether if you have enough pollinator-friendly plants such as salvia and lantana.

**Beware:** Two small raptors are often drawn to feeders: Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks. Both prey on songbirds, and they're difficult to thwart. The sharp-shinned hawks (aka "sharpies") mainly target small birds, while Cooper's typically prefer rodents.

*Contributed by volunteer Jerry Uhlman, an avid birder who wrote the Flyways & Byways column for the Richmond Times-Dispatch for 20 years. He also penned the Birder's Guide to Metropolitan Richmond guidebook (available in Lewis Ginter Garden Shop) and articles for national wildlife magazines. Watch for him in Boomer magazine, too!*

**Be An Early Bird**  
*Lewis Ginter opens 8 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.*

## GOT MILKWEED?



Monarch caterpillars feed exclusively on milkweed leaves; therefore, milkweed is critical for the survival of monarch butterflies.

**Why Milkweed?** Monarch caterpillars ingest chemicals from milkweed which are toxic to many species of birds and mammals. When the caterpillar turns into a butterfly, it retains these toxins, helping to protect it from predators.

**Plant Local.** Although tropical milkweed is available for purchase at many retail outlets, it's best to plant local varieties instead.

A local milkweed that is highly ornamental and widely available in the nursery trade is butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*).

### **BUTTERFLY WEED** (*ASCLEPIAS TUBEROSA*)

**Clusters of color.** Crown-shaped flowers blaze with bold orange or yellow vibrancy this time of year.

**Nectar 'n' pollen.** Butterflies, monarchs and hummingbirds greedily guzzle its nectar, while only wasps pollinate its flowers.

**Easy does it.** Hassle-free and easy-to-grow characterize this popular perennial.

*For information on other Virginia natives and more—including bloom times and photos—log on to lewisginter.org and click on "What's In Bloom."*

# SUMMER SPROUTS



## THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN DROP-IN PROGRAMS

The Children's Garden has programs every day of the week in June, July and August!

### Monday

Garden Art  
10-11 a.m.  
*Meet in the Children's Garden*

### Tuesday

Family Walk and Talk  
Departing at 10 a.m.  
*Meet at the Robins Visitor Center*

### Wednesday

Drop-in and Dig!  
10-11:30 a.m.  
*Meet in the Children's Garden Farm Garden*

### Thursday

Good Green Fun  
5-6 p.m. during *Flowers After 5*  
*Meet in the Children's Garden*

### Friday

Storytime in the Garden  
10-11 a.m.  
*Meet in the Children's Garden*

### Saturday

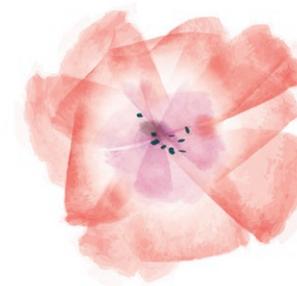
Drop-in and Dig!  
10-11 a.m.  
*Meet in the Children's Garden Farm Garden*

### Sunday

Garden Art  
2-3 p.m.  
*Meet in the Children's Garden*

GARRETT NASRALLAH

# COMING UP IN THE GARDEN



## ONGOING

**Origami in the Garden**  
*sponsored by Altria Group*  
Through Sept. 30

**M&T Bank Butterflies LIVE!**  
Through Oct. 14; includes  
*A Northward Migration, a Sound Arts Richmond installation*

## SUMMER

**Flowers After 5**  
Through Sept. 13; extended hours on Thursday nights till 9 p.m. (*Fidos After 5 on 2nd and 4th Thursday nights through Sept. 13*)

**Father's Day Weekend**  
June 16-17

**Richmond Area Daylily Society Show and Sale**  
June 16

**CarMax Free Fourth of July**  
July 4

## FALL

**Genworth Free Community Day**  
Sept. 3

**Fall PlantFest**  
Sept. 14-15

**RoseFest**  
Oct. 7

**OktoberFest**  
Oct. 27

**Goblins & Gourds**  
Oct. 28

*Please visit [lewisginter.org](http://lewisginter.org) for all of our classes, activities and more; sign up for the weekly events newsletter at the bottom of our homepage.*

*Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @lewisginter for the latest on what's happening in the Garden.*

**LEWIS  
GINTER**  
BOTANICAL  
GARDEN

1800 Lakeside Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23228

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**PAID**

PERMIT 520  
RICHMOND, VA

# FLOWERS AFTER 5

## **THURSDAY EVENINGS**

JUNE 7-SEPT. 13

Stroll through lush displays and enjoy Origami in the Garden. Due to requests, we've added an extra hour of live music; now 5-8 p.m.! Check out schedule at [lewisginter.org](http://lewisginter.org).

*Fidos After 5 on 2nd and 4th Thursdays.*

