

Ginter Park

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Ginter Park Residents Association News



Dates to Remember...

Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 8
7:30 p.m.
St. Thomas' Church
Hawthorne & Walton

Dinner & General Meeting

Thursday, February 24
6:30 p.m.
St. Thomas' Church
Hawthorne & Walton

February 24 General Meeting

A GPRA General Meeting is always a good excuse to get out of the house at the end of winter. Thursday, February 24 at 6:30 at St. Thomas' Church will be our next dinner meeting. Another delicious entrée will be prepared by Meredith Strange-Boston, plus sides and desserts by you.

President Rebecca Dodson has three items to consider on the business agenda.

1. Traffic light discussion with a City representative.
This will focus on the timing at major crossings in our area.
2. Security of out buildings after many neighborhood break-ins
3. CAPS success through neighbor involvement

Child care will be provided.

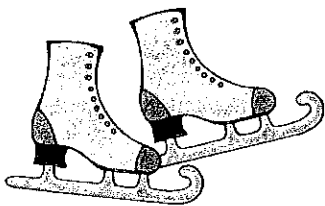
IDEAS ASKED FOR

NORTH BOULEVARD/SCOTT'S ADDITION DEVELOPMENT

The city's soil testing on the Diamond property has made Councilman Charles Samuel's meetings even more timely.

At some unknown time in the future, the city administration may present to the Council proposals from developers or its own staff for projects along the Boulevard from Broad to Westwood. There may also be changes suggested in Scott's Addition, that area from the Boulevard west to the I-195 underpass. This area is transitional, as more buildings

See Ideas on Page 3



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GPRA

This newsletter is produced by:
Ginter Park Residents Association
P.O. Box 25374
Richmond, Virginia 23260-5374

Published monthly except January and August

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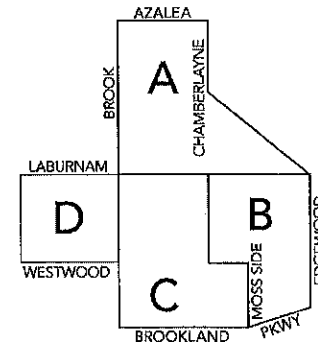
Annette Foster 274-0175

District Representatives

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| A | Lois Sisk | 264-0558 |
| | Richard Minter | 839-4696 |
| | Neil Ohlsson | 266-3446 |
| B | Martin Erb | 321-6372 |
| C | Jonathan Murdoch-Kitt | 353-8500 |
| D | Honor Carver | 358-2690 |

Member-at large

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| Kristen Allegood | 404-273-2371 |
| John King | 321-4421 |



Newsletter Editor

Anne Thorn 353-9363

Advertising and copy deadline is the second weekend of each month. Send comments, corrections and articles to:

**Editorial Committee, P.O. Box 25374
Richmond, VA 23260**

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become residential, changing from the majority commercial/light industry mix of the past. Often the policy of the administration has been to make a plan, draw the contracts and have all the facts in place before it is presented to the Council.

Councilman Samuels would like to hear what the neighbors of these areas would like or, more importantly, would not like to see in these locations. For example, would they like to have major retailers, such as Target or a grocery within this area? Should it be more walkable? What would encourage people to stay longer and spend more?

Councilman Samuels would like to hear what the neighbors would like or not like to see in these locations.

To get input and assess feelings, the councilman is holding a series of three meetings, from January 25 to March 1. He would like to hear from residents and businesses to know how to proceed.

Eight blocks of Laburnum Park are within Samuels' Second District. Touching the corner of the Boulevard at Westwood, they are affected by activities around the Diamond property. The GPRA is vitally interested and will be represented at these meetings.



The **Ginter Park Welcome Committee** sends a HUGE Thank You to the following local merchants who have generously contributed to our new neighbor welcome baskets:

- **Murphies** - 3141 West Cary Street
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- **Nicola Flora** - 1219 Bellevue Avenue
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- **Once Upon A Vine** - 4009 MacArthur Avenue
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- **Row House Soaps** - 121 East Main Street
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If you would like to contribute to our welcome baskets, please contact Ellen Canestrano at canestrano@yahoo.com or 228-2286.



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Linwood Holton Elementary School

Learning Garden Project — Update on “The Dandelion”

If you've driven down Hermitage Road recently, you may have noticed Linwood Holton Elementary School's outdoor classroom located on the grounds directly behind the school. The “Hudson House,” named for Holton's beloved Principal, David Hudson, is only part of Holton's “Learning Garden Project” that has been in development since the spring of 2009. The garden's official name is “The Dandelion,” after Holton's mascot, the lion.

The project was developed by dedicated Holton parents, teachers, and community members who wanted to make use of the under-utilized space behind the school, by creating a natural wildlife habitat and meadow area that

would include an outdoor classroom, paths, observation areas, vegetable gardens, and bird and butterfly habitats. The Dandelion will give Holton's students an exciting new space in which to learn lessons in science, social science, math, health, and above all, to gain a new appreciation for our natural environment.


This project has come to life because of countless parent, teacher, and community volunteers. Volunteers are key to the continued success of the project. A recent strategy meeting with Tricycle Gardens helped the project set priorities and develop action plans. Our focus is to Get Students Outside Growing Lots of Healthy Food.

HERE ARE A FEW WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

1. Donate seeds. We will take all kinds whether or not they are on our planting list.
2. Volunteer on Friday to work with a class. We need speakers, planters, & organizers.
3. Help us with on-going communication efforts.

Thanks for your support of the Holton Outdoor Classroom!!


Everyone in the surrounding community is encouraged to explore and enjoy Holton's Outdoor Classroom. For more information on The Dandelion or if you would like to donate or offer services, please contact: **Susanna Raffenot**, sraffenot@verizon.net or **Ellen Shepard**, ellenshepard@yahoo.com



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2011 SPRING PLANTINGS AT HOLTON:

Planted in the fall and hope will come back: Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chard, and Garlic.

Herbs: We have one and plan to add a second perennial herb bed. We hope to have these in the garden this spring: Rosemary, Lavender, Mint, Oregano, Mexican Sage, Russian Sage, Lemon Balm, Lemon Verbena, Cilantro, Borage, Dill, Fennel, Chives, Thyme, Chamomile (or other herbs for tea), Marjoram and Parsley. A variety of basil including: African, cinnamon, lemon, lime, chocolate, and red (several varieties).

Vegetables: Oxheart carrots (want to plant a variety of colors), Spinach, Onions, Peas, Lettuces, Japanese Turnips, Sweet Radishes, New Potatoes, Kale, Variety of types of beans, Strawberries, Peanuts, Nasturtiums, Cucumbers, Tomatillos, Bell peppers, Tomatoes, Okra

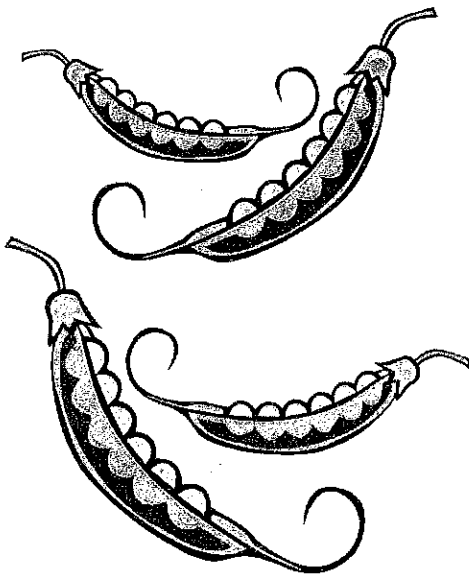
Wildflowers/no mow area: Plant designated butterfly area with wildflowers to attract butterflies in the area by outdoor classroom.

Fruit bushes/vines: Grapes and maybe berry bushes.

Trees: Maintenance of nine fruit trees as well as all other newly planted trees.



Get Students Outside Growing Lots of Healthy Food.



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St. Thomas' Day School offers a weekday morning program for children, ages 2 through pre-kindergarten, September through May

Director: Mrs. Kelly Kane, phone 329-1117

The Pride of the Northside

By Tim Holtz

Thomas Henderson Middle School sits literally one block from the boundaries of the Ginter Park neighborhood. Yet the school, like John Marshall next door to it, remains mostly off the radar of the majority of our GPRA residents. Hopefully this has started to change.

With financial assistance from a GPRA grant, Henderson hosted its first January Open House. This January 12 event was scheduled for the same week as those of other traditional middle schools "of choice"—Hill and Binford. It offered individuals and families from Ginter Park (and across the northside and city) the opportunity to cross the threshold of the building, hear from administrators and teachers, and learn about how Henderson is positioning itself as the "Pride of the Northside."

After a short assembly time in the auditorium, guests traveled the building to attend three presentations of their choosing. These presentations were held throughout the school and were led by the school's faculty; among others, they included: transitioning to middle school; extra-curricular activities; special needs services; technology; and academic rigor.

Engagement with Henderson is not limited to just that night's event. Interested/prospective students can arrange a school day visit and the chance to "shadow" another student. Opportunities exist to involve volunteers in the school through the PTA (you don't have to have a child at

the school to join), Watch DOGS (Dads of Great Students) program, classroom assistance, event planning (like the coming Jazz on the Lawn in June), and media center help. And especially of interest to Henderson's leaders is involving volunteers who attended Henderson as a child (a number of which we have across Ginter Park).

The school's new website will be launched in March and will provide an easy way to connect with these opportunities and to stay current on the latest school news. Until the website launches, you can get connected by contacting the school or Tim Holtz, Henderson parent and PTA Vice President, at tholtz@hotmail.com or 804-244-0143.

*Come discover and help advance
The Pride of the Northside!*

For more information contact

- Henderson Middle School - 804.780.8288
- Tim Holtz, Henderson parent and PTA Vice President
tholtz@hotmail.com or 804.244.0143.

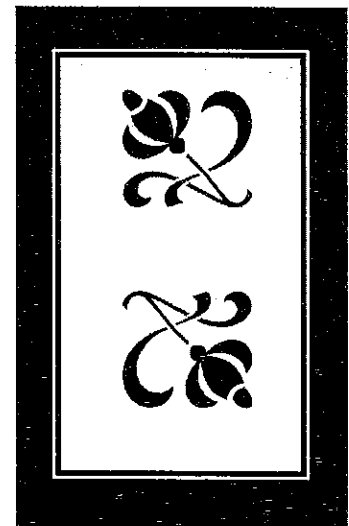
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FEBRUARY IN THE GARDEN



By Tim Rhea

(Ed note: Tim is a certified Master Gardener and volunteer at the Botanical Garden)

Ah, February, the short month that can seem so long! I've been fortunate to live in this neighborhood for over a quarter of a century, moving here from Illinois. A few years before we moved here, the Chicago area had an absolutely miserable winter, bitter, windy, with nearly 90 total inches of snow. In the small yard we had there, I ran out of any place even to shovel the white stuff!

Then, as if reprieved, my family and I got to enjoy winters in Richmond, and for many years they usually were a joy: seemingly just a smidgen of cold and snow, with spring arriving in February! With last winter in mind, that view must be tempered, because winter can be almost as mean in Richmond as it usually is in Chicago, just not for the same length of time, thankfully.

If you've gardened in Ginter Park for several years, you probably have plantings that reward you with those first lovely hints of spring, even in February: early bulbs, shrubs, and trees that jump into bloom with a few 50 degree days, and some tougher perennials that quickly green up with warming temps. If you're new to the neighborhood, you may not know what your yard has in store for you, or you know that there is work to do to establish some finer February flora.

One of your first stops should be a short trip up Hermitage/Lakeside to the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden on a mild February afternoon. Now 26 years old and counting, it is

your best insight into what starts sprouting and blooming this time of year. The Garden does not want to attract its largest visitation for the Christmastime light show when the plantings can not be seen. Instead, it is promoting the late winter/spring theme of "a million blooms", so you can see how Mother Nature sets up her own "light show" with bulbs, perennials, shrubs, and trees.

February will always be a cautionary time. This month we seem to lack patience. We've had enough winter this year to want the return of warm weather and outdoor gardening as soon as possible. It is so very tempting to run to the garden center on the first warm weekend and start buying plants to bring color back immediately.

Instead, take a deep breath and do some yard and garden planning. Focus those plans on one or two areas of your yard, a place that either disappointed you in 2010 or which you want to develop in 2011. First of all, look out of a favorite window. Do you see an area that you would like to view very differently a year from now? Be selfish, make your garden plan not for the neighbors but for yourself! Seeing it from a favorite window is a good way to keep it in mind and enjoy the changes you make.

All Ginter Park gardens share a couple of concerns: heavy clay soil and well-established trees. The trees, of course, help to make this the lovely neighborhood it is, but their roots spread far in our yards. The heavy soil is a fact of

continued next page

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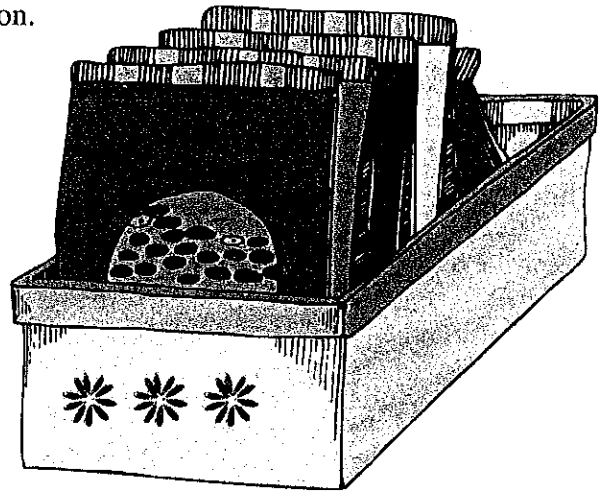
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our geology! Thus, your garden plan begins with soil preparation. (February is a good a time to start a compost pile! Obviously, it won't provide you much soil leavening until much later in the year, but get it started in February if you aren't already saving leaves and veggie scraps.)

Consider elevating your first garden bed in the yard to minimize fighting the tree roots and clay, using mulch, composted manure, sand, and a planting mix. Use a water-transmitting garden fabric as your base: it allows water to move through but keeps out the weeds and roots.

Don't buy plants, buy seeds! It's so easy to overspend on plants as we anticipate spring, but many favorites grow readily from seed, and seed packets help keep the splurging costs down. February can be the perfect month to start those seeds indoors, if you have a warm spot near a sunny window. The more humidity and strong light once they sprout, the better. Fresh green seedlings give us hope for the warm months to come.

Many annual seeds can be directly sown outside by late March, if we have spring-like weather. You can try cosmos, coreopsis, dill, bee balm, chard (for the foliage), larkspur, nasturtium, nicotiana, snapdragons, spider flower (cleome), sweet pea, and even marigolds, especially if you have a little microclimate of soil near a brick patio or an asphalt driveway, protected from the wind. Sometimes I have to protect the seedlings after sprouting on a cold night. But these are seeds! Always fun to take a chance!



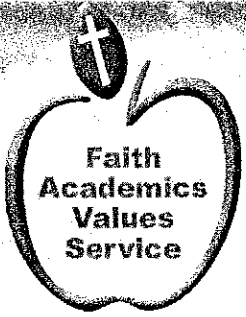
**“start seeds indoors ...
near a sunny window”**

So, don't despair in February!

Inspire yourself to plan a floriferous future in your yard!



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Dear Neighbor,

January 25, 2011

Happy New Year! We hope that you will join us to celebrate the upcoming year and the wonderful neighborhood where we live. The Ginter Park Residents Association (GPRA) is neighbors—people just like you, who have chosen to work together, blending their unique talents to make our neighborhood a diverse and thriving place to live. The GPRA celebrates the strengths of our neighborhood architecture and history while advocating for continued improvements in education, crime, and infrastructure. GPRA provides a newsletter, website and Yahoo group to keep the neighborhood informed and involved, regardless of membership status. The GPRA general meetings, open to all residents, provide opportunities to gather and share ideas with each other and our government leaders, police officers, and city administration. We invite you to be part of the solution and be an advocate for this wonderful neighborhood we call home.

Please use the enclosed membership form and envelope to send in your membership today.
(If you have already joined for 2011, thank you!)

Membership means:

- Support for neighborhood initiatives like public safety, zoning, beautification, and more
- Dinner at general meetings
- Voting privileges
- Eligibility for neighborhood contests and social and neighborhood events
- Discounts for the Garden Walk, Home Tour and other neighborhood activities
- Holiday party invitation in December

We hope you will find a way to participate and share your talents in our volunteer-led committees and efforts (learn more online at www.HistoricGinterPark.org.) Please take a moment to go to the GPRA website and follow the link to join the GPRA Yahoo group if you are not already a member. This will allow you to receive public safety and neighborhood information directly. It has become a great way for folks throughout the neighborhood to communicate.

We hope you will join us Thursday, February 24th, 6:30 pm, at St. Thomas Church for the first General Dinner Meeting of the year. **Everyone is invited!**

Sincerely,
Rebecca Dodson - President@HistoricGinterPark.org

GPRA 2011 Dues Coupon

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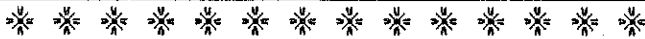
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