

## THE GARDEN CLUB OF VIRGINIA HONORARY AWARDS

### *The Massie Medal For Distinguished Achievement*

by Nancy Talley, GCV Editorial Board Member  
Winchester-Clarke Garden Club

A behind-the-scenes leader who says modestly, "I have done what I was asked to do," was awarded the Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement at the May 2001 Annual Meeting of The Garden Club of Virginia.

Martha Dorries Whipple of The Garden Club of Fairfax won The Garden Club of Virginia's highest honor for, as her medal inscription reads, "her

spirit of dedication, enthusiasm, zeal, organization and professionalism."

"I was floored," says Marty, whose husband, Dr. George A. Whipple, children, and grandchildren were present in Martinsville for the presentation at the Annual Banquet on Wednesday, May 16. "I am the most naive person in the world—it never occurred to me. I haven't moved any mountains. But it makes what I have done for The GCV seem very worthwhile. It's a wonderful honor."

What she has done is worthwhile indeed. While serving as her

club's president, 1985-1987, she became Chairman of the Annual and Board of Governors

Meeting, 1986-1988. As Treasurer of The GCV, 1990-1994, she set the stage for the computerization of The GCV financial records, accomplished by the succeeding Treasurer. She was appointed Finance Chairman, 1994-1996, and was elected First Vice President, 1996-1998.



*Marty Whipple*  
The Garden Club of Fairfax

In announcing the award, Bev King (Mrs. David F.), Chairman of the Massie Medal Committee, praised "her devoted attitude to her club and The Garden Club of Virginia... most evident in her perennial attention to the unsung details that help these clubs flourish and bloom."

Calling her "intelligent, nurturing, thorough, cheerful, earthy and beloved," Mrs. King went on to say, "She has generously provided leadership and shared her extraordinary gifts with her club and The Garden Club of Virginia, (and has) influenced member clubs throughout the Commonwealth."

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### *The deLacy Gray Memorial Medal For Conservation*

*by Kim Nash, GCV Editorial Board Member  
The Warrenton Garden Club*

*Bonintia americana.* This reliable native perennial is noted for its spreading habit and long blooming season. It adapts to a variety of ecosystems, generally enriching and enhancing those sites where it becomes established.

Those who recognize this virtual addition to the latest native plant list know that Goran Ivanisevic is not the only winner to emerge from Croatia recently. This year's deLacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation was awarded to Fran Boninti (Mrs. Andrew F.).

A member of the Rivanna Garden Club, Fran has worked tirelessly as a volunteer to educate young and old on how to identify, safeguard, and propagate native plants. She has played a vital role in the School Tour Program of the Ivy Creek Foundation. In organizing the landscaping effort around the Education Building at The Ivy Creek Natural Area, she persuaded 16 nurseries to donate trees, shrubs and plants.

At the Holkham Hollow Natural Area, Fran spearheaded the successful effort to win a grant to develop natural areas on neighboring common

lands and helped residents refine trails, build bridges and plant seedlings. She co-authored a guidebook to the area with local history, maps and identification of flora and fauna.

In addition, Fran headed the committee that constructed a butterfly garden and bluebird trail for the Meriwether Lewis Elementary School.

With characteristic modesty, Fran says "a lot of people should have their names engraved along with

mine on the medal." She credits the inspiration and guidance of her co-workers at the Ivy Creek Foundation with sending her down the path of environmental education. Her membership and participation in the Virginia Native Plant Society has influenced the zeal with which she promotes the virtues of our own indigenous flora.

The Garden Club of Virginia is fortunate to have Fran's generous vitality, her breadth of knowledge and her deep-rooted commitment to Virginia's native environment as a resource, as well as a treasure.



*Fran Boninti*  
Rivanna Garden Club