

Massie Medal Award for Distinguished Achievement

*By Sarah Bass, GCV Massie Medal Committee Chairman
The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club*

The winner of the 2006 Massie Medal Award for Distinguished Achievement was presented to Bessie Boccock Carter at the Annual Meeting on May 10, 2006, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Bessie has served on numerous committees and held most major offices in her own member club,

The James River Garden Club and is an honorary member of The Albemarle Garden Club.

Her Garden Club of Virginia involvement started with her concern for and interest in conservation issues. She was appointed the chairman of the Conservation Committee and at the same time was active in the Piedmont Environmental Council. Her involvement went beyond the Commonwealth of Virginia when she chaired the Land Use and Preservation Committee and the National Affairs and Legislative Committee for The Garden Club of America. Because of her passion for conservation, she was awarded the deLacy Gray Award for Conservation in 1991.

Her activities in The GCV continued -- chairing several other committees, being elected second Vice President and then President in 1998 to 2000. But she did not stop there. After her term as President she chaired the Long Range Planning Committee and later became the chairman of the Restoration Committee. She reorganized the Restoration Slide Show and took it on tour around the state to member clubs and other civic organizations. Her witty dialog made her famous throughout the state.

In her warm, friendly way she has promoted her interest in gardening, shared her talents in flower arranging and amazed us all with her energy and generosity of spirit. She has opened her home numerous times for Historic Garden Week, member club meetings and GCV functions.

The Massie Medal was presented to the "Weed Queen" on her birthday.



Bessie Carter, recipient of the Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement with Sara Bass Chairman of the Massie Medal Committee and Deedy Bumgardner, The GCV President.

The 2006 deLacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation

*By Jocelyn Connors, GCV Conservation Chairman
The Lynchburg Garden Club*

At the 2006 Annual Meeting, the deLacy Gray Medal for Conservation was awarded to Rossie Fisher. She and her family share a deeply rooted passion for the environment. As a child in Manakin-Sabot, she developed a love and care for the land from her mother, Mary Ross Scott Reid. Long before many people learned about recycling and water conservation, her household put it to practice. Conservation was always second nature to the family.

Twelve years ago Rossie and her husband Sandy completely eliminated the use of pesticides, hormones and commercial fertilizers on their farm. They worked hard to have it named a "Certified Organic Farm" in the Commonwealth of Virginia, also meeting federal standards. Organically produced beef, hens and eggs are their main cash crops. Rossie oversees the hens, preparing and feeding them a potent mix of organic corn, chickpeas, soybeans and flax seed to produce enriched omega three eggs. The hens are kept in portable coops which are moved over the many acres of Brookview, allowing them to eat bugs, worms and fresh grass, at the same time creating well fertilized grazing pastures.

Brookview also has the largest composting operation in Virginia. The leaves from Henrico County's fall collection are composted there and used as the fertilizer for the crops. Brookview Farm is open to individuals and groups to demonstrate organic farming practices. The Fishers have held workshops for Public Television's "Virginia Home Grown" series, The GCV's 2005 Conservation Workshop, and many other civic and agricultural groups.

Rossie is a member of The Center for Rural Culture, an organization which encourages local farmers, artisans and other small business people to create profitable and sustainable enterprises that enhance and preserve Goochland County's rural nature. This includes producing organically grown foods for local markets.

Rossie has served as president of the The James River Garden Club, been extremely active on several GCV committees and a past Zone VII representative and director for The Garden Club of America. Her positions of leadership have afforded her a platform to be a very articulate spokesperson and ambassador for conservation. Her work in the field of organic farming and her sharing of that knowledge makes her a very deserving recipient of the deLacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation.



Rossie Fisher, recipient of the 2006 deLacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation