



## The Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement

By Mary Bruce H. Glaise

*Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement Chairman*

*The Little Garden Club of Winchester*

Mina Walker Wood was awarded the 2010 Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement at the Garden Club of Virginia Annual Meeting held at the Jefferson Hotel. She has served her garden club, her community and the Garden Club of Virginia with loyalty, diligence and creativity.

A native of Lynchburg and a graduate of Sweet Briar College, Mina has been a member of the Lynchburg Garden Club since 1968. As president of her club from 1982-84, she started the Lynchburg Garden Club Endowment Fund, a model and catalyst for other club endowments. She has been successful in furthering environmental and conservation issues that the club has undertaken. She was an active participant in raising money and awareness to beautify the Lynchburg Expressway entrances. Many other organizations have benefited from her interests including Lynchburg Historical Foundation, the Southern Memorial Association and the Point of Honor Board of Managers.

Mina's skill and talent as a landscape designer are evident at Cabell Street Park in Lynchburg. She worked on the Miller-Claytor House front garden, designed to complement the one in the rear created by Charles Gillette.

The GCV has benefited from her tremendous energy and gifts of diplomacy and vision. She has held most board positions and major positions on committees of the GCV. She organized and expanded the library at the Kent-Valentine house, served on the *Journal* committee and as Restoration Chairman. As president from 2000-02, Mina traveled extensively with her presentation, *Landscape Architects of the Garden Club of Virginia* including a speech delivered to the Southern Garden History Society. Most recently she was instrumental in launching the successful new Symposia in response to the Strategic Plan. Her vision, helpful nature and generous disposition brought a concept into reality.

The GCV has given its most prestigious award to Mina for her effective and unselfish dedication.



*Mina Walker Wood*

# The 2009 de Lacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation

*By Julie Grover, GCV Director-at-Large  
The Blue Ridge Garden Club*

**T**he mother-daughter team of Mary Stuart Gilliam and Catharine Gilliam, members of the Blue Ridge Garden Club, was awarded the de Lacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation at the Garden Club of Virginia's Annual Meeting in Richmond.

The Gilliam family is synonymous with conservation in Rockbridge County. When Col. Bates McCluer "Mac" Gilliam, Mary Stuart's husband, died recently, the Rockbridge Area Conservation Council paid tribute to him as an early member and past president. Mary Stuart has worked behind the scenes to promote the conservation and wise development of the natural resources of her beloved Rockbridge County. Son Jay currently serves as the chair of the Natural Bridge Soil and Water Conservation District board of directors. Catharine, with two GCV colleagues, received a 2008 award from the Virginia Conservation Network for her volunteer excellence in preserving Virginia's environmental citizen boards. As the Virginia Senior Program Manager of the National Parks Conservation Association, Catharine worked tirelessly for the commonwealth as a conservation advocate on such issues as threats from adjacent development, conservation planning, air quality, community partnerships and planning, climate change, mercury pollution and energy policy. She has taken on such giants as Wal-mart and has appeared on or been quoted in CNN, NPR, The Washington Post, as well as local newspapers and radio stations.



*Mary Stuart and Catharine Gilliam  
with Cabell West and Anne Doyle*

In February 2009 the Boy Scouts of America announced their plans to move the National Scout Jamboree, with its more than 240,000 scouts, to Goshen in Rockbridge County. At risk was Goshen Pass, a Virginia State Natural Area Preserve treasured for its scenic beauty, rare plants and wildlife, recreational adventures and history. The Gilliams helped activate the Friends of the Maury River, a grassroots group opposed to the Boy Scout proposal. At a called meeting of the Blue Ridge Garden Club, Mary Stuart outlined past threats to Goshen Pass, the history of the involvement of our club, and the immediate need for our club to adopt a resolution to oppose the National Jamboree proposal. The Garden Club of Virginia, with its long history of preserving Goshen Pass, adopted its own resolution and wrote the governor, asking for adequate analysis of the environmental impact.

"Save Goshen Pass" – the battle cry and Web site were largely the brainchild of the Gilliams. In a mere five months, the Gilliams helped to galvanize citizens of Rockbridge County and the Commonwealth of Virginia to stop the proposed scout jamboree in Goshen. Catharine's conservation expertise and network and her legal skills as an attorney were invaluable. Mary Stuart was behind her daughter every step of the way, attending community meetings and designing T-shirts. Thanks to the Gilliams' leadership, the Garden Club of Virginia has protected Goshen Pass yet again.