

The Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award

*By Anne Beals
The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club*

2012 marks the third time the Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award has been presented. Through a generous contribution from her family, Bessie Carter's name will be henceforth associated with what she considered one of the Garden Club of Virginia's most important pursuits – that of preserving and enhancing the natural resources of the commonwealth for the benefit of all of its citizens. The Carter family wished for this to be a monetary award meant to promote cooperative projects among the various clubs in the GCV and other community groups and for the projects to be seminal and ongoing.

In concert with the Garden Club of the Northern Neck, this year's award goes to the Northern Neck Land Conservancy for its project intended to protect the vital habitat of the Cat Point Creek Watershed. Cat Point Creek Watershed is a 48,000-acre area connecting the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, and is listed by the Nature Conservancy as one of only a few "last great places" remaining in the coastal plain of Virginia. It is a resource for a vast number of flora and fauna, containing one of the largest eagle habitats in the state and providing a migratory stopover for many other avian species. The Northern Neck Land Conservancy aims to help preserve the area through education and the implementation of conservation easements. The conservancy will protect natural resources and prevent new pollutant sources by limiting development through landowner outreach, student engagement and public education. The Garden Club of the Northern Neck will partner with the Northern Neck Land Conservancy in the project by teaching environmental best practices to Westmoreland and Richmond County fourth grade science classes and distributing informative educational placemats to area restaurants, describing the value of protecting land and the Cat Point Creek habitat.

The Garden Club of Virginia is honored to be able to present this prestigious award to the Garden Club of the Northern Neck and the Northern Neck Land Conservancy. ❁



GCV Members and Officers Lois Spencer, Kim Nash, Karen Jones and Carol Carter, with Carol Hughes, Northern Neck Land Conservancy

The Garden Club of Virginia appreciates responsible advertising and reserves the right to accept or reject submitted advertisements. Inclusion in the Journal is not to be construed as an endorsement by the Garden Club of the advertised goods or services.