

The 2016 Dugdale Award

by Lesie Leake

Three Chopt Garden Club

Conservation and Beautification Award Chairman

William S. Portlock was awarded the Elizabeth Cabell Dugdale Award for Conservation at the 2016 Conservation Forum in Charlottesville. Mr. Portlock has spent his life working in natural resource conservation, education and research. Equipped with four years of service in the United States Coast Guard and a B.S. degree in biology from Old Dominion University (1974), he launched a career that has included teaching, research, photography, writing and consulting about conservation at the local, state and national levels.

Mr. Portlock joined the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in 1981. As their Virginia Field Director, he began the foundation's Environmental Education Program. In 1989, he launched "Teachers on the Bay," an educational program designed to enrich educators' knowledge and understanding of the Chesapeake Bay, emphasizing the importance of public involvement in caring, restoring and managing its health. This hands-on environmental course, offered each summer to Virginia teachers, was developed in partnership with St. Margaret's School, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the University of Mary Washington. Currently in its 28th year, the course is now offered through Virginia Commonwealth University as the institution of record for graduate credit. Beginning in 2000, Bill led students, teachers and community volunteers in environmental restoration efforts including riparian buffer tree plantings, submerged aquatic vegetation and tidal wetlands restoration, and oyster restoration. He advises schools and communities on the use of rain gardens, rain barrels and native wildflower meadows to capture storm water pollution. In 1987, Bill initiated a bald eagle survey that first documented a notable concentration area of bald eagles on the Rappahannock River. Coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William and Mary, the bald eagle surveys continue annually. His photographs of the flora and fauna of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries have enriched many publications, including National Geographic.

Mr. Portlock's employment history includes the College of William and Mary, Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Mary Washington, the Maymont Foundation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Mathematics and Science Center (Richmond), Virginia State Parks, the National Science Foundation and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, where since 2004 he has served as Senior Educator for the Bay.

To quote Bill Portlock, "As citizens, we have a responsibility to provide future generations with the knowledge, skills and motivation needed to make informed environmental decisions that are certain to be part of their future." The Garden Club of Virginia honors Mr. Portlock in his dedication to conservation education and his lifelong devotion to the preservation of our natural resources. ❁



Photo by Carol Carter.

GCV Conservation and Beautification Committee Chairman Wendy Vaughn, Dugdale Award recipient Bill Portlock, GCV President Nina Mustard

The 2016 Conservation Educator Award

by *Leslie Leake, Conservation and Beautification Award Chairman*
Three Chopt Garden Club

The Roots & Shoots Intergenerational Garden Program was presented the first Conservation Educator Award at the Conservation Forum in Charlottesville on Nov. 3, 2016. Co-founded by Molly Brown and her late husband, Dirck, the Roots & Shoots program has been in operation in Lexington for over two decades. Its dual goal is uniting generations, creating a partnership between community groups, individuals, educators, parents and students while educating young children through hands-on gardening about the origin of food. Its flagship school garden at Waddell Elementary was recently refurbished and reopened this fall as an outdoor classroom for multiple grades and is a vital part of the curriculum at the school. Lesson plans are tailored to help students with the Virginia Standards of Learning, varying in emphasis from grade to grade. While kindergarteners learn their letters in an alphabetical garden, second graders learn the science of plants and fourth grade students explore history, learning how plants were grown in a colonial garden. Each year the program benefits more than 300 students and incorporates 40 volunteers at the Waddell School alone.

The Roots & Shoots program was developed by Dr. Jane Goodall in Palo Alto, Calif., where Molly and Dirck Brown were part of a group that created an educational garden that teamed senior citizen volunteers with elementary school students to plant and learn from the garden. When the Browns retired to Lexington, Va., they began to build partnerships in the community to create and build the Roots & Shoots Garden at Waddell Elementary School near their home. The Blue Ridge Garden Club has worked with the Roots & Shoots program at Waddell Elementary since the program's inception. In that time, Roots & Shoots has received the Commonwealth Award in 1996 and national recognition from the American Horticultural Society and the Children and Nature Network. Originally, the program began with the second grade curriculum in 1995 but has since expanded to all grades, kindergarten through fifth.

Beyond classroom education, and in the words of its founders, the Browns, "The friendships developed between the older Roots and the younger Shoots help to promote positive attitudes between the generations." The Garden Club of Virginia is honored to present the Conservation Educator Award to a program that truly embodies our mission. ❁

Sallie Sebrell (left) of the Blue Ridge Garden Club, accepting the GCV Conservation Educator Award on behalf of Molly Brown, Roots and Shoots Intergenerational Garden Program co-founder, from GCV Conservation and Beautification Committee Chairman Wendy Vaughn.



Photo by Carol Carter.