

Bessie Boccock Carter Conservation Award Finalists for 2021

The Conservation Awards Committee announces the finalists for the 2021 Bessie Boccock Carter Conservation Award. Ballots will be sent to all Garden Club of Virginia member clubs in January and should be returned to the GCV by March 31.

The winner will be announced at the GCV Annual Meeting in May. The finalists are:

Albemarle Garden Club

"Stream Restoration Education at McIntire Botanical Garden"

Planned remediation of a degraded stream running through McIntire Botanical Garden located in Charlottesville will offer educational opportunities as to what stream restoration is, what healthy streams look like and who benefits. Informational signs will be posted at the streams' edge prior to the start of the remediation process. As the construction along the stream begins and progresses, local conservation agencies and volunteers will test the water, document the results and display them on site and on-line. Collaboration with volunteers from Albemarle Garden Club, McIntire Botanical Garden, Boy Scouts of America, local high schools and the Rivanna Conservation Alliance will allow both students, scouts and community members to measure, document and learn about stream restoration.

Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club

"Roundabout Meadows"

The Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club (FLGC) is partnering with Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) on a highly visible piece of land in Loudoun County, located between new development to the east and conservation land to the west. The intense buildout near Dulles Airport has brought an influx of thousands of new families unconnected to the land.

The Old Carolina Road Trail Project, located at PEC's Roundabout Meadows property, provides an outdoor experience that invites one to explore a wild place steeped in history while defining the natural environment, explaining the ecological values and sharing in the ongoing research and restoration taking place on this strategic piece of land. Since 2014, much has taken place to restore degraded pastures, improve aquatic resources, uncover layers of history and identify and document the flora communities.

FLGC has provided funding, community support, strategic planning and partner building for the trail and its adjacent natural resources. An informational kiosk will be completed by the close of 2020. Native plantings around the kiosk are planned for early 2021. The opportunities for ongoing research and documentation will continue. Additional plans are underway to enhance the educational experience and improve the trail access in a logical and informative way.

Our ongoing interest and support for this project is long term.

Continued

The Lynchburg Garden Club and Hillside Garden Club "Roadside Biodiversity Native Perennial Beds"

The Lynchburg Garden Club and Hillside Garden Club are pleased to present Phase II of our Roadside Biodiversity Initiative. Phase I, completed in 2019, established 3 acres of roadside pollinator beds. Phase II installs a large demonstration bed along a heavily traveled Lynchburg highway (40,000 drivers daily). The bed will feature non-GMO/non-Neonicotinoid native perennials, shrubs, and trees that will provide food and habitat for insects and wildlife throughout the year. During the winter, the faded plant material will be left intact to provide winter wildlife habitat. Education about the New Perennial Movement and the importance of promoting biodiversity in our local ecosystem will engage our community. We will partner with the City of Lynchburg, LEAF, Crowther Landscape Architecture, and Irvington Springs Farm to complete the work. These partnerships are delivering over \$30,000 of savings over retail cost and point to the shared commitment to diversity in our community. We will package and promote the planting list as a pollinator bed online project for home gardens, thereby providing a resource for using this naturalistic approach to landscaping. This model can easily be scaled statewide on highways and in residential gardens and amplify a conservation ideal that supports our ecosystem's preservation.