

## Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award Finalists 2022

The Conservation Awards Committee announces the finalists for the 2022 Bessie Bocock Carter Conservation Award. Ballots are sent via email to all GCV member clubs and should be returned to: Ann Heller, GCV Communications Coordinator, 12 East Franklin Street, Richmond, 23219, or [communications@gcvirginia.org](mailto:communications@gcvirginia.org). The winner is announced at the annual meeting in May.

### ALBEMARLE GARDEN CLUB

*“Stream Restoration Education at Botanical Garden of the Piedmont”*

Planned remediation of a degraded stream running through the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont 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 construction begins along the stream, local conservation agencies and volunteers will test the water, document results and display them on site and on-line. Collaboration with volunteers from Albemarle Garden Club, Botanical Garden of the Piedmont, 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 as citizen scientists. The mission of the garden is to invite all community members and visitors to engage in nature, to educate and inspire through the beauty and importance of plants, to advance sustainability, and to promote human and environmental well-being.

### FAUQUIER & LOUDOUN GARDEN CLUB

*“Roundabout Meadows”*

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

The Old Carolina Road Trail Project, located at the 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.

The garden club has provided funding, community support, strategic planning and partner building for the trail and its adjacent trailhead, completed in 2021. With “on the ground” assistance from club members, native plantings were installed in 2021 around a kiosk and along the new trail. The next phase of the planning is intended to further enhance the visitor experience, creating additional opportunities to enjoy the property’s beauty and learn about plant life, ecology, geology and history. A focal point for 2022 is to create a publicly accessible “lookout”, just beyond the existing trail’s treeline.

## SPOTSWOOD GARDEN CLUB

### “Growing Citizens with Seeds of Conservation”

Since 2018, Lacey Spring Elementary School’s conservation education curriculum has focused on efforts to include outdoor learning and hands-on activities for all its students. The benefits have been numerous: teaching students to plant, care for, harvest, cook, then eat the food they have grown. Beginning with a school “garden club”, this program includes recycling and composting in the cafeteria with containers on each table for waste. Their recycling program now reaches into students’ homes. The school grounds are a well utilized resource for the local community.

Promoting the efforts of one elementary school has the potential to serve as an inspiration and catalyst for change in our education system by instilling a conservation ethic in young students, their families and community. Installing an outdoor learning center with seating for an entire classroom will benefit their environmental curriculum and immerse students in their outdoor resources- gardens, greenhouse, wind turbine and solar panels. Spotswood Garden Club began supporting school efforts in 2019, and we plan to continue our support, both monetary and physical, for their projects to include future gardens. Our commitment is to the future-with our youth becoming good stewards of nature’s resources- to establish an Outdoor Classroom area for students to provide easy access to all outdoor resources and increase conservation education resources. Completion of the classroom is slated for late Fall/early Winter of 2023, with future projects and work sessions planned with the school.