

Dec. 8, 2008

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County honors '2009 Grow a Green Community' calendar winners

Sarasota County commissioners will make a special presentation at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 9, to honor 13 elementary school artists whose illustrations comprise the 2009 "Grow a Green Community" calendar. More than 1,500 students entered this year's competition to depict ways to save energy and reduce waste and air and water pollution.

"This year's calendar theme is all about living a sustainable lifestyle," said Rob Wright, who coordinates the calendar contest for Sarasota County through its Neighborhood Environmental Stewardship Team (NEST) program. "It all begins with the realization that we do not own the earth's resources, and that we are only borrowing them for a time before we pass them on to future generations. We hope the calendar will help highlight that making wise choices in how we use our land, water, energy and transportation will determine what we have left to pass on."

Wright's group asked the students to use their imaginations and talent to show what being sustainable means to them. "The kids' artwork shows that they really get the concept of making those wise choices and we can certainly learn from them," Wright added.

This year's calendar features each winning illustration, along with a thought for the month to encourage sustainability practices, an overview of the county's neighborhood grant program, a glossary of "sustainable terms" and a special section on Sarasota County's urban forestry program.

The annual calendar contest is open to any elementary student in any public or private Sarasota County school, including charter and elementary-age home-schooled students. Each winner's school will receive a supply of calendars for distribution, and copies of their winning artwork will be displayed throughout January 2009 in the Sarasota County School Board Administration and at G.WIZ Science Museum.

Copies of the calendar will be available at all county public libraries and administration facilities after Jan. 1, 2009. To get a free copy of the 2009 "Grow a Green Community" calendar, or to learn more about the NEST program, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for Rob Wright.

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