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Murdock Elementary Collects Top Scores for waterSmart's Third Annual Rain Barrel of Fun Contest

--Cobb County students rewarded for creative rain barrel designs--

MARIETTA, GA (May 11, 2010) – The votes are in, and waterSmart has announced the winning class for its 2010 Rain Barrel of Fun contest. Teacher Chris Haon's third-grade students from Murdock Elementary have been named top winners for their barrel design scored on creativity, artistic ability and teamwork.

Approximately 230 children from nine Cobb County primary and elementary schools participated in the program, which promotes working as a team and using creativity to learn about the water cycle and outdoor water conservation.

Teachers and students were given just over five weeks to build, design and complete their barrels. Supplies to make and decorate the rain barrels were provided by Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority and Cobb County Water System.

"In the Rain Barrel of Fun contest, all participants are winners," said Becky Mixon, waterSmart's program Director. "Not only because they learn valuable lessons about water conservation, but also because the rain barrels, once decorated, are kept in the school gardens to help provide water."

Winning Murdock teacher, Chris Haon, and his class worked together to create a unique contest entry. "Our barrel was inspired by folk artist, Howard Finster, who was famous for using 'junk' to create art. The students decorated our barrel with bottle-top edges, flowers made of old egg cartons and other recycled items fashioned in a mosaic pattern to spell 'Murdock,'" said Haon.

Runners-up included second-grade students from Baker Elementary and Rocky Mount Elementary. Baker teachers Ms. Lauralyn Sunseri and Ms. Darlene Boyee brought their students together to design a barrel inspired by the school's butterfly garden. Ms. Glynis McGee's class from Rocky Mount decorated their barrel based on the theme "Every hand makes a difference." The students used handprints to create grass and sunflowers encircling their barrel.

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Other participating schools included Birney Elementary, Brumby Elementary, Fair Oaks Elementary, Ford Elementary, Kennesaw Primary and Sedalia Park Elementary.

Local celebrity judges included:

- Walter Reeves, Georgia Gardener;
- Chris Holcomb, Meteorologist, 11Alive;
- Cynthia Rozzo, Editor, *The EAST COBBER*;
- Ken Cook, Chief Meteorologist, FOX 5; and
- Jeff Hill, Morning Meteorologist, FOX 5.

Kathy Nguyen, senior project manager at Cobb County Water System, appreciates the help of community members.

“waterSmart is a successful program because of dedicated judges, teachers and parents. We are truly grateful for those who take time to teach our youth about water conservation efforts,” said Nguyen.

For more information about waterSmart or Rain Barrel of Fun, please visit www.waterSmart.net.

About waterSmart

The waterSmartSM program was initiated by the CCMWA in 2000 to educate their service area residents of all ages about the importance of indoor and outdoor water conservation and to help encourage sustainable, year-round conservation, regardless of climate conditions. The CCMWA is in its eleventh year of providing the waterSmart program to the community. For more information on water conservation and waterSmart, visit www.waterSmart.net.

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