

Dec. 8, 2009

Media contact: Pat Haire, 941-861-5104; cell 941-650-2850; phaire@scgov.net

Project contact: Robert Wright, 941-232-5567, rwright@scgov.net

Sarasota County honors students for sustainability calendar illustrations

Sarasota County commissioners today honored 13 elementary school artists whose illustrations appear on the 2010 “Live a Low-impact Lifestyle” calendar. More than 1,300 students entered this year’s competition to illustrate ways to encourage the thoughtful and sustainable use of water and energy.

“Most people are surprised to learn how water and energy are inextricably linked in our daily lives,” said Rob Wright, who coordinates the calendar contest for Sarasota County through its Neighborhood Environmental Stewardship Team (NEST) program. “Providing clean water for our county takes a lot of energy, and producing that energy requires large quantities of available water. This year’s calendar focuses on what each of us can do to save energy, conserve water, green our environment, preserve our natural lands and keep our bays clean and healthy.”

The popular annual calendar features each winning illustration, along with a thought for the month to encourage sustainable use of water and energy. It also includes an overview of how Sarasota County is using low-impact development techniques in ongoing construction projects to improve the quality of local water bodies. A special section highlights the Sarasota Environmental Aquatics (SEA) Team, an award-winning volunteer group that provides scientists with valuable information about local scallop and seagrass populations.

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, and copies of their winning artwork will be displayed throughout January 2010 in the Sarasota County School Board Administration offices.

Copies of the calendar will be available at all county public libraries and administration facilities after Jan. 1, 2010. To get a free copy of the 2010 “Live a Low-impact Lifestyle” calendar, or to learn more about the NEST program, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for Rob Wright.