HCSWCD announces contest winners

By Laurie Brokaw

The Henderson County Soil & Water Conservation District has announced the winners of its 2011 education contests.

Eleanor Palmer, an eighth-grader at The Mountain Community School, won first place in the speech contest. Her teacher is Chuck Palmer. Kendall Scupider, who is also in eighth grade at The Mountain Community School, won second place. Eleanor went on to compete in the Area 1 speech competition, and won second place there.

Michael Bowen, a sixth-grader at The Mountain Community School, won first place in Henderson County for his essay. His teacher is Peggy McCarter. Second place went to Kendall Wick, and third place went to Stephanie McCravy. They are both also sixth-graders at The Mountain Community School. Michael’s essay also competed in the Area 1 essay contest, and placed fourth.

In the fifth-grade poster contest, Ian Brown won first place, Rebekah Littauer won second, and Haley Hembree won third. Kayla Garren received an honorable mention. All four of the poster contest winners are from Etowah Elementary School. Ian’s teacher is Patricia Parker. Ian’s poster also took first place in the Area 1 competition, and has been sent on to compete at the state level.

For more photos of contest winners, see page 3.

Farmland May Qualify for Lower Tax Assessment

By Dee Hill, Special to The District Current

Land that is a part of a farm unit that is actively engaged in the commercial production or growing of crops, plants or animals under a sound management program and meets certain statutory requirements, as set forth in N.C.G.S. 105-277.2 – 277.7, may qualify for the Present-Use Value Program. Land approved into the program will be assessed at a lower value than market value. The difference in value between market and present-use is deferred until the land becomes disqualified, at which time the then-current year is assessed at market value, and the prior three years’ deferred taxes become due.

Applications are accepted during the regular listing period, January 1 to January 31, each year. Property owners currently receiving the Present-Use Value deferment must notify the Assessor’s Office of any and all changes to the property. The program is not for everyone. Priorities given to estate planning and income tax considerations, encumbrance of a conservation easement, transfer of title or ownership, and change in use may render the property disqualified or unsuitable for present-use valuation. Should you have any questions regarding the Present-Use Value Program, or questions regarding property currently enrolled in the Present-Value Program please, contact Dee Hill at 698-4424. The Tax Department hours of operation are 8:30-5:00 Monday through Friday.

Dee Hill is the Exemption and Present-Use Appraiser for the Henderson County Tax Department.
ANNUAL TREE SEEDLING SALE SETS RECORDS

By Monica Booth

HCSWCD’s annual tree seedling sale in February was one of its most successful sales to date, bringing in 160 orders and selling over 10,000 seedlings and young trees.

Up for sale were many always-popular species, such as the Eastern White Pine, Southern Crabapple, Chestnut Oak and Persimmon, as well as several types of potted trees, such as Green Giant Arborvitae and Tulip Tree.

Proceeds from the annual sale are used to fund the district’s educational programs such as the speech, essay and poster contests, and the district tries to donate unsold seedlings to county schools.

To be among the first to hear the details of next year’s seedling sale, be sure you are included in our email information list. Send an email to Monica.booth@nc.nacdnet.net or call the office to sign up.

Monica Booth (left) and Laurie Brokaw (center) add up a tree seedling sale order for a Henderson County resident during the Feb. 26 sale.

Photo by Jonathan Wallin

‘THE DISTRICT CURRENT’ GOING ALL-ELECTRONIC

This issue of The District Current will be the last to be printed and sent out to mailboxes around Henderson County.

Because of budgetary restraints and increasing postage costs, Henderson County Soil & Water Conservation District will discontinue mailing copies of the newsletter in favor of more economical methods such as email and Internet. We hope everyone who has not signed up for our email information list will do so and continue to read The District Current. Call the office or email Monica.booth@nc.nacdnet.net if you’d like to sign up. If you do not have internet access, please call the office and we will try to work out a way to keep The District Current coming your way.

CONTESTS

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From left, Rebekah Littauer, Haley Hembree and Kayla Garrett. All three are from Etowah Elementary School. Not pictured: Essay winners Michael Bowen, Kendall Wick and Stephanie McCrary.

Photos by Jonathan Wallin
FARM BUREAU MAKES FARM SAFETY SIGNS AVAILABLE

By Jimmy Cowan, special to The District Current

That busy farming time of year is gearing up again. In Agricultural Advisory Board and Soil & Water Conservation Board meetings, plus the County AG Preservation Plan and many public meetings, the need for farm safety signage was discussed. Let’s keep our farms, farm equipment and farmers safe. North Carolina Farm Bureau has bought signage in bulk and is selling it back at their cost, which is cheaper than you going out to buy just one. Contact one of the Henderson County NC Farm Bureau offices (or call Jimmy Cowan at 919-306-5788) and get your signs posted!

Jimmy Cowan is a District Field Representative for the NC Farm Bureau Federation.