

Newsletter
December 2006

CREEC Region 3

California Regional Environmental Education Community



Upcoming Student Contests and Competitions

Winter appears to be upon us in Northern California, and many schools are gearing up for holiday musicals and other activities. For teachers, this is busy time. Many are assessing student progress and assigning grades, and most are wrapping up units before students leave for winter break. As things begin to wind down and you take a few minutes to get things in order for their return in January, you may want to spice up your lesson plans by entering your students in one of the many contests or competitions available. This issue is dedicated to informing you of opportunities for involving your students in fun projects that teach them how to be good stewards of the environment.

Jiminy Cricket Environmental Challenge for 3rd – 5th Grades

For 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade students, the Jiminy Cricket Environmental Challenge offers two levels of commitment. The first, a student pledge to do three things to be good environmental stewards, is available to all who **turn in an entry form by December 15**. The form can be completed online at: www.jceckids.org. The second level of commitment for 5th Grade only involves students in designing and implementing a project, such as recycling, composting, etc. The application process for this is early March. Prizes are available for all participants at both levels and grand prize includes a class trip to Disneyland and a special awards ceremony.

SRWP Sponsors Local River of Words (ROW) Art & Poetry Contest River of Words (ROW) Workshop in Yolo County on January 20

River of Words (ROW) is a nature-based science, art, and poetry program created to promote watershed awareness, literacy, and the arts. A River of Words workshop provides K-12 educators (classroom teachers and other non-formal educators) with ideas and inspiration for integrating nature exploration and the arts into core subject areas including science, math, social studies and language arts. This workshop will also help educators prepare students for the ROW annual art and poetry contest. Participants will receive a 270-page "Watershed Explorers Educators' Guide" (K-12). For more information on River of Words, visit www.riverofwords.org. To register for this workshop, go to: www.ycoe.org/profdev/. The workshop is under "interdisciplinary". The fees for this workshop are \$25 for Yolo County Teachers and \$35 for non-Yolo County Teachers. Scholarships are available

The Sacramento River Watershed Program (SRWP) sponsors a local ROW art and poetry contest for K-12 students in the Region. For more information visit, <http://www.sacrriver.org/education/row.html>.

Region 3
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Arbor Day Poster Contest: Trees Are Terrific!

A FREE curriculum kit explaining how to conduct the annual Arbor Day poster contest will be available in October 2006. This contest activity is open to all California fifth grade children assisted by their teachers, parents, youth or club leaders. The kit contains suggestions for activities and projects that will increase student awareness and appreciation of the importance of trees and conservation of forests. The contest theme for 2007 is "Trees are Terrific...and Forests are Too!" These activities are correlated to California's science and visual arts standards.

Each school or participating group selects one poster to submit to the statewide contest. The contest deadline is March 1st (postmarked). One state level winner will be selected and forwarded to The National Arbor Day Foundation for final judging. The California Community Forests Foundation will provide the top three poster entries winners with cash prizes. Their teachers will be awarded gift certificates and other rewards. All entries are acknowledged with a personal letter and become part of a year-long traveling exhibit shown at the California State Fair Forestry Center and several museums and nature centers.

The national winner, a parent and the student's teacher or group leader, will receive invitations to The National Arbor Day Foundation's annual celebration in Nebraska City, NE. The winner will also receive a \$1,000 savings bond and many other prizes.

To request a kit, contact Kay Antunez, contest coordinator, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection at (916) 653-7958 or Kay.Antunez@fire.ca.gov.

Nature Bowl for Grades 3-6

The Nature Bowl is a cooperative team competition for all 3rd through 6th grade students. Questions and activities focus on local and regional environmental science and issues, and correlate with the science content standards. Nature centers throughout Region 3 host orientation workshops for coaches in the fall and the semifinal competitions in the spring. The final competition takes place in May at CSU Sacramento. Interested in forming a Nature Bowl team at your school or youth program? Click on the Student Contests link at the left and go to "Local Contests" for more information, including a schedule of orientation workshops for coaches or [http://www.creec.org/region3/stories/storyReader\\$135](http://www.creec.org/region3/stories/storyReader$135)

Teen Ink: Environmental Solutions Contest

Do your teenage students have a creative plan to stop pollution? Have they found a way to encourage recycling in your neighborhood? They can share ideas to solve an environmental problem or describe a current solution. Every month one teen is honored for the best Environmental Solutions article. Essays are published in Teen Ink magazine and contest winners receive \$25 and a copy of the magazine featuring their environmental solution. Teen Ink will only consider original essays written by teens. Essays should be between 150 and 1,000 words. Possible topics include global warming, clean water, species preservation, air quality, the rain forest, alternative power, depletion of resources and more!