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News Release



For Immediate Release

Date: May 6, 2014

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Supervisory Refuge Ranger

Banks Lake National Wildlife Refuge Student Art Contest Winners Announced

Folkston, GA.... Fifteen Lanier County third through fifth grade students have been selected as winners of the Banks Lake Fishing Derby Art Contest. First, second, third, honorable mention, and Grand prize winners have been selected for students in each grade. All participants did an excellent job depicting the natural beauty of Banks Lake as well as the wonderful recreation opportunities that take place there. Several hundred of Cindy Lyon's art students from Lanier County Elementary School submitted artwork for the competition. The art was based on the theme "Banks Lake Habitats" and created in anticipation of the upcoming Banks Lake Youth Fishing Derby on June 7th, 2014. Most students used colored crayon or felt-tipped markers, while some expressed themselves with watercolors or mixed-media in an effort to inspire others to visit the refuge.

This unique art contest uses grocery bags as the canvas, all donated by Harvey's Supermarket in Lakeland. Over the next month, the winning art bags will be prominently displayed at Harvey's. Non-winning bags will be given out to grocery store customers. Supermarket patrons and contest participants alike look forward to having their groceries bagged in this handmade art.

The winning students will be recognized at the awards ceremony during the Annual Banks Lake Fishing Derby, where the winning bags will be displayed and returned to the artists. Don't forget to mark your calendars to attend the Annual Banks Lake Kids Fishing Derby on June 7th, beginning at 7:00 a.m. at Flatlanders Lake. The awards ceremony and activities going on at Bank Lake National Wildlife Refuge will begin at 9:30 a.m.

Below is a list of the art contest winners by grade level:

Third grade:

Grand – Deniel Geronimo

First place – Kayla Rogers

Second place – Linsee Jones

Third place – Kamaren Blake

Honorable Mention – Mikayla Williams

Fourth grade:

Grand – Maegan Newsome

First place – Ava Brogdon

Second place – Ethan Moore

Third place – Lillie Lyons

Honorable Mention: Reagin Jones

Fifth grade:

Grand – Madison Hunt

First place – Ashton Abbott

Second place – Hannah Barnett

Third place – Micah Gaither

Honorable Mention – Sarah Kajfas

A special thank you goes out to the judges of this youth art competition including teachers Carol Moore, and Dianne Sanders (retired) and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge employees, Gracie Gooch, Sarah Wyatt, and Chelsea MacKenzie.

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The Suwannee Canal Recreation Area (East Entrance) to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is the primary entrance managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is located 11 miles southwest of Folkston, GA off Hwy 121/23. The refuge is open daily and offers a variety of opportunities for the visiting public. Call 912-496-7836 or visit the refuge website at www.fws.gov/okefenokee for hours of operation, upcoming events, and entrance fee information.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook pages at www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge or www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwssoutheast, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwssoutheast>.