

State Fairgoers vote Saint Thomas More Academy student's artwork first-place winner in youth rain barrel painting contest



Governor Markell and Secretary Small with Saint Thomas More Academy Principal Rachael Casey, who accepted the award for Karen Scarangella.

HARRINGTON – Today at the Delaware State Fair, Governor Jack Markell, DNREC Secretary David Small and DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship Director Acting Director Robert Palmer appraised the top entries in this year's youth rain barrel painting contest before announcing the winning barrel, as voted by fairgoers this year, was "Tiki – H2O Progenitor," painted by Kara Scarangella, a high school sophomore at St. Thomas More Academy, Magnolia.

Fairgoers had the opportunity to view the top five finalists' painted barrels on display in the DNREC Building at the Fair, and to vote until Tuesday's deadline for their favorite. All five barrels will remain on display until the fair closes Saturday, July 30. The other finalists were:

- Second place: "Reign of the Sea," by Sophia Birl, Savannah Stewart and Chloe Wilson of Delmarva Christian School, Georgetown

- Third place: “Mrs. Minion,” by Rachel Santos of Phillip C. Showell Elementary, Selbyville
- Fourth place: “United States of Water,” by fourth graders Alec Ciesinski, Owen Reazor and Alex Ozor of Maclary Elementary School, Newark
- Fifth place: “Nature Preservers,” by fourth graders Jordan Short, Katrina Endres, Ella Baldwin and Olivia Kessler of Maclary Elementary School, Newark

Also recognized was the grand prize winner in the adult rain barrel painting contest, Nathan Zimmerman of Milton, a construction reviewer with DNREC’s Sediment and Stormwater program. His barrel, “Early to Rise at Sundown,” which depicts a barred owl perched over water, will be placed at Woodburn, the Governor’s Residence in Dover.

DNREC sponsored the two rain barrel painting contests to educate the community on the benefits of using rain barrels to reduce rainwater runoff and improve water quality. Ten youth participants and 10 adult participants were chosen for the contests based on their applications, design ideas and site placements. Individuals or groups chosen each received a fully-assembled, primed 55-gallon plastic barrel, topcoat and bubble wrap; they supplied their own paint, brushes and other materials or tools. They then had five weeks to finish their artistry and submit final photographs and information, as well as a short biography of themselves.

As part of the program, each selected individual or group is required to find a public home for their finished rain barrel. Placement can be at a school, with a nonprofit organization, church, municipal building, or other public location.

For more information about the rain barrel painting contests, including photos of the entries, please click [2016 Rain Barrel Art Contest](#). For more information on the contests, please email [Sara Wozniak](#) or call 302-382-0335.

What is a Rain Barrel? A rain barrel is a container that collects and stores the water from roofs and downspouts for future uses such as watering lawns, gardens, and house plants; cleaning off gardening tools; and washing your car. Rain barrels help lower your water bills, particularly in the summer months by collecting thousands of gallons of water a year. Rain barrels are also important for our environment because they help reduce water pollution by decreasing the amount of stormwater runoff reaching our streams and rivers. An average rainfall of one inch within a 24-hour period can produce more than 700 gallons of water that run off a typical house. Such stormwater runoff picks up anything on the ground such as litter, excess fertilizer, pet waste, and motor oil, transporting it to storm drains that dump the untreated water directly into our waterways.

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