



# *Heartbeat of the Hickory*

## *Spring 2018*

*Newsletter of the  
Hickory Underground Water Conservation District No. 1*

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### Poster Contest 2018

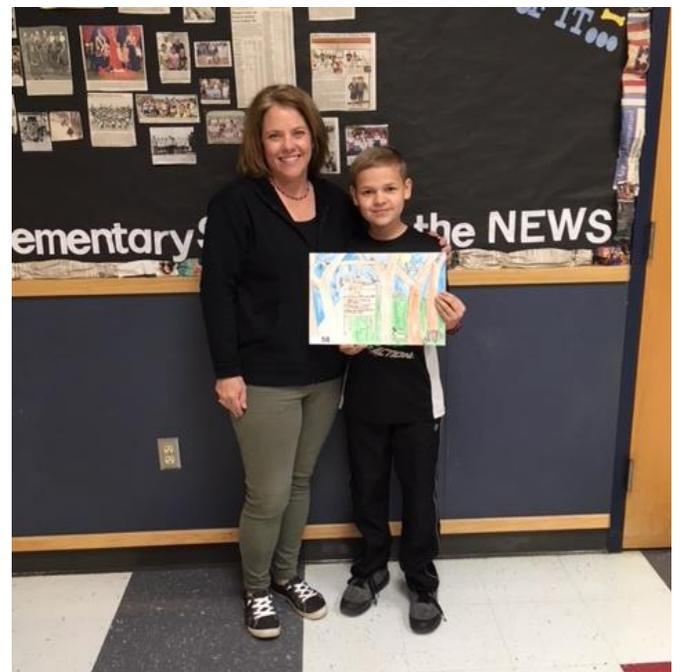
This year the District received 113 posters for the annual water poster contest. Students from all 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes in the six-county District were invited to participate. This year's theme was Wild About Water!

All three winners are McCulloch County 5<sup>th</sup> graders. First prize, a \$25 Walmart gift card, went to Conner McWilliams and second prize, a \$20 Walmart gift card, went to John Parrish. Both are from Mrs. Pitcox's Rochelle Elementary class. Ethan Teague from Mrs. Dudney's Brady Elementary class, won the \$15 third place prize.

Posters are judged by the Board of Directors, staff, and those attending the board meeting. The posters are numbered so the artists remain unknown to the judges.



From left to right: Conner McWilliams and John Parrish



From left to right: Mrs. Dudney and Ethan Teague

### Election Cancelled

The election slated for May 5, 2018 to elect directors from Precincts 1, 2, and 5 has been cancelled due to all three incumbents remaining unopposed. The next election will be May 2020 for Precincts 4 and 5.

Water use reports were due March 15. If you own a permitted well or wells (used for irrigation, public water supply, commercial or industrial production), and you haven't submitted your annual report, contact our office so we can fix you up. If you currently receive your form by mail and would like to receive it via email in the future, drop us a line at [hickoryuwcd@yahoo.com](mailto:hickoryuwcd@yahoo.com) with WUR in the subject line.

*"The top three conservation issues in Texas are water, water and water."*

*Robert Cook, executive director of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department 2002-2008*

## 4-H Water Ambassadors Making Waves in Texas



With the support of Hickory Underground Water Conservation District and many others in the water industry, a new Texas 4-H initiative is helping to grow the next generation of water leaders. 2017 marked the debut of the Texas 4-H Water Ambassador Program and the selection of the first cohort of high school youth. The goal of the Program is to provide youth an opportunity to gain advanced knowledge and develop leadership skills related to the science, engineering, technology and management of water in Texas.

Sixteen youth representing 13 Texas counties were chosen to participate in a summer 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy. This 8-day educational tour experience covered 2,200 miles, featured 30 tour stops and educational presentations, and engaged nearly 80 water industry professionals across the State. The Academy exposed ambassadors to a wide range of water issues, provided a unique perspective of the many challenges faced by local communities, and offered a behind-the-scenes look into water planning. Tour stops and presentations addressed water law, policy, and management as well as hydrogeology, water treatment, and emerging technologies in irrigation management, reuse, desalination, and aquifer storage and recovery.

For participating youth, this experience greatly increased their appreciation for the complexity of meeting water demand with limited and uncertain water supply. It also opened their eyes to the many career opportunities in the water industry. "I have had the opportunity to learn a lot of new things and explore the water industry this past summer. I gained a new perspective: Water doesn't just appear in your faucets and hoses, it's carefully planned and managed by a community of passionate people." –Molly McKinney (4-H Water Ambassador from San Antonio)

As 4-H Water Ambassadors, these youth are charged with providing water education and service back in their communities. Since July 2017, water ambassadors have provided more than 450 hours of service and have reached more than 6,000 youth and adults with water education. They lead water education efforts in their schools, 4-H clubs, and at community events. Several ambassadors have presented to their local groundwater conservation districts and at regional water planning meetings. For some, this Program has sparked an interest in advocacy and collaboration. "As an amateur ecologist and small farmer equipped by Texas 4-H2O, I have recently presented on new agriculture methods that protect soil and water at a science conference and joined a citizen-lead committee to manage water pollution on Chocolate Bayou in Brazoria County." –Christian Hernandez (4-H Water Ambassador from Manvel)

These activities encourage ambassadors to continually increase their water knowledge and provide a unique opportunity to develop leadership and presentation skills that will serve them well in the future. "The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program has opened my eyes to a whole new world of water, both in industry and government. This program has provided me with many opportunities to increase my leadership skills, especially in the areas of teaching and teamwork." –John Phillip Jones (4-H Water Ambassador from Pattison)

Online applications for the 2018-2019 class of 4-H Water Ambassadors are now being accepted and interested youth are encouraged to apply. Application deadline is May 20. More details about the Program and application instructions are available online at <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/water/>. To be eligible, youth must be entering the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, or 11<sup>th</sup> grades for the 2018-2019 academic year. Applicants do not have to be a current 4-H member. If selected, these individuals will be required to join a local 4-H club.

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**The District is offering scholarships for this program!!!!**

**Complete your application and contact us for more information!**