

# Press Release

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## **Grease can artists, schools honored; their cans on display**

FALLBROOK – After 500 entries from six Fallbrook schools came rolling in for the Fallbrook Public Utility District’s annual grease-catcher environmental art contest, the painstaking task of selecting the cream of the crop began.

Cans were decorated to look like grease monkeys, pigs, charming containers affixed with hearts and beads, and one even looked like R2D2 and played sounds when the lid was lifted.

The top 14 were selected and the Fallbrook schoolchildren who crafted them were recognized at the May board of directors meeting. In addition, Fallbrook Street School was awarded the district’s \$400 prize for having the greatest number of entries in the contest. Zion Lutheran School won \$100 for having the second-most.

The contest, open to first- through fifth-graders in Fallbrook, is part of the “Grease – in the Can, Not the Drain!” campaign, an effort to inform residents that kitchen grease poured down the drain is a leading cause of sewer spills in Fallbrook. Oils and fat stick to the sewer pipes and clog passageways, causing back-ups and sewer spills.

In the seven years since the campaign began – a few milestones have been crossed: more than 4,500 grease cans have been crafted by students in Fallbrook between the contest, a grease-can education booth at the Avocado Festival and classroom presentations. And FPUD officials are noticing a difference as habits seem to be changing and since it has been many months since there was a grease-related spill.

The district has been selected, for the third year in a row, to receive the Community Cornucopia Award from the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District for this program. FPUD has also been awarded a \$1,500 grant from water wholesaler the San Diego County Water Authority for the purpose of expanding the program. This is the second grant awarded for the program since the program’s inception.

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The prizes are incentives for schools to encourage student participation, and go toward the schools' art programs. The grease cans are currently on display in the FPUD board room, and then in June will go on display at The Art Campus at Fallbrook.

The 14 young artists were presented certificates and prizes, including gift certificates donated by Walmart for making the grease cans.

The decorated grease cans could solve the sewer-spill problem by remaining on kitchen countertops. Parents would then line the cans with a plastic bag and then fill them with cooking grease, and then toss the bag in the trash when full.

“It’s amazing what the students come up with for this project,” said Noelle Denke, agency spokesperson who created the program. “They’re so creative!”

Students from La Paloma, Live Oak School, Fallbrook Street School, Zion Lutheran, La Paloma, William H. Frazier and Iowa Street School participated in the contest.

The winners are:

- First-place is Amanda Smith, 4<sup>th</sup> grade, Zion Lutheran School
- Second-place is Simeon Hixson, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, Zion Lutheran School
- Third-place is Isaac Lopez, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, Fallbrook Street School
- Joe Moran, Fallbrook Street School
- Isiah Garcia, Fallbrook Street School
- Jose Vargas, Fallbrook Street School
- Abby Wade, Fallbrook Street School
- Teresa Arias, Fallbrook Street School
- Melyssa Aaron, Fallbrook Street School
- Jose Gonzalez, La Paloma Elementary School
- Kaia Slattery, Maie Ellis Elementary School
- Travis Tysor, Zion Lutheran School
- Julia Wilson, Zion Lutheran School
- Sebastian Rojas, William H. Frazier Elementary School