



Clean Water. It starts with you.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAKE THE WATER CONNECTION CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCES "*DUCKY AWARD*" WINNERS

**Stearns County High School Winning Teams and Teachers to be Honored
on Thursday, May 24 at 5 p.m. at Gander Mountain in Waite Park.**

ST. CLOUD, MN — Move over Emmys, Oscars, and Golden Globes. Stearns County now has its own coveted award recognizing outstanding creativity and communication. Central Minnesota's first annual Ducky Awards will be presented to winners of the *Make the Water Connection* Ad Contest on Thursday, May 24 at 5:00 p.m. at the Gander Mountain store in Waite Park.

For the past several weeks, high school students across Stearns County have been busy creating 60-second TV ads in hopes of winning one of three \$1000 awards for their school's sponsoring department, plus a \$400 Gander Mountain gift card for each winning entry.

The contest is part of the larger *Make the Water Connection* campaign sponsored by the Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance. The campaign urges residents to make simple changes in everyday activities that will have a positive impact on water quality for us, for wildlife and the environment as a whole. To get out the word further and impress the importance of water protection on the next generation, CMWEA and Gander Mountain invited high school students throughout Stearns County create 60-second TV ads showing how they would promote one of CMWEA's top ten water protection tips found on the CMWEA website at mnwaterconnection.com.

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Judging took place on Thursday, May 10, with representatives from CMWEA, Gander Mountain, St. Cloud Times, Thelen Advertising and Charter Media facing the challenge of selecting the winning productions from a large number of entries submitted by students county-wide. The following three winning entries each receive \$1000 for their school, a \$400 Gander Mountain gift card, and an official Ducky Award:

"Get a Rain Barrel — Save \$" — from Apollo High School's team of three juniors including Megan Potter, Michelle Meyer and Naima Toure. The supporting teacher was Joe Shulte, technology education instructor.

"Don't Rake into the Lake" — from ROCORI High School's team of four juniors including Andy Guggenberger, Nick Loxtercamp, Cory Wenz and Kyle Ratke. The supporting teacher was Linda Liebl, multi-media instructor.

"Don't Forget Your Doggy Bag" — from ROCORI High School's team of four students including Ellyn Kinzer, Kelsey Lintgen, Autumn Struffert and Elisa Traut. The supporting teacher was Linda Liebl, multi-media instructor.

Five honorable mention entries were also selected, recognizing teams from St. John's Preparatory School, Apollo High School, and ROCORI High School. All winning and honorable mention entries, along with team member and teacher names, can be viewed on the CMWEA website and will be aired on cable public access channel 19 in St. Cloud.

The Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance (CMWEA), a joint effort of Stearns County and the cities of St. Cloud, Sartell, St. Joseph and Waite Park, pools government resources to more cost-effectively educate residents about their role in protecting water quality. CMWEA members seek to involve other Central Minnesota counties and cities, and welcome inquiries from governmental, civic and outdoors organizations interested in supporting the clean water effort. To learn more, visit the *Make the Water Connection* website at www.mnwaterconnection.com

— 30 —



Official sponsor of the *Make the Water Connection* TV ad contest.

Make the Water Connection is a program of CMWEA - Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance with support from: Stearns County, the cities of St. Cloud, Sartell, St. Joseph & Waite Park, and the Upper Mississippi River Source Water Protection Project. Thanks also to Sauk River Watershed District, Stearns County Soil & Water Conservation District & MN Rural Water Association.

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