

## HEALTHY YARDS POSTER CONTEST

Central Bucks Elementary School students were introduced to local water quality issues and invited to participate in a Healthy Yards Poster Contest in an effort to raise awareness on the important connection between healthy yards and healthy water bodies. Sponsored by the Warrington Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), students were educated by EAC representatives through an interactive watershed model and through a water analysis from local water body, the Neshaminy Creek. Through these lessons students saw first hand that the pollutants we put on our lawns (litter, pet waste, fertilizers, etc.) run off during storm events and affect the health of our water bodies.

Students were encouraged to make positive changes to their own yards that would prevent pollutant run off. Students choosing to participate in the Healthy Yards Poster Contest will transform their yards into a healthy yard; one that filters pollutants or will capture them, preventing them from washing into our water bodies. Healthy yard techniques that students can convey in their design can include rain gardens, no-mow zones, or creating innovative methods to limiting the pollution on their lawns.

Posters will be awarded for their work done to transform their yard into a healthy yard. Gift cards will be given to one student from each class who can show the most effective and creative methods of preventing pollutant run off. Winners of each class will then have their work on display at the Warrington Township Building for Earth Day 2009. Their work will serve as a model as to how we can all make minor changes to our environment to protect it and that we can all start in our own backyards.

Schools participating in this educational contest include Barclay Elementary, Mill Creek Elementary and Jamison Elementary. The following classes competing are Jared Hottenstein's fifth grade class and sixth grade classes including: Todd A'Harrah, Carrie Chrillo, Cynthia Jansen, Melissa O'Neill, Alison Riley, Miles Roe, Brian Swank and Lisa Wambold.

The Healthy Yards effort has been partially funded by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund through a Section 319 Federal Clean Water Act grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency administered by Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.