

**PRESS RELEASE
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Troup TREEmendous awards student essay, art contest winners

(Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010) Four Troup County school students received prize packets proclaiming them “Tree Warriors” at today’s Troup County Board of Education meeting.

Todd Stephens of Troup TREEmendous recognized the students from Berta Weathersbee Elementary and Gardner Newman Middle schools as winners of the Troup TREEmendous essay and art contest promoting preservation of and appreciation for trees.

Essay contest winners, all fifth grade students at Berta, include Hannah Cody, first place; Camren Russell, second; and Jordan Slonaker, third. Winner of the art contest is Dakota Crowson, sixth grade student at Gardner Newman. All students received a prize package from Troup TREEmendous containing a “Tree Warrior” T-shirt, journal and other school supplies.

“It’s a wonderful thing to see how our young people embrace environmentalism,” said Troup TREEmendous Education Chair Todd Stephens. “They have a connection with the natural world that adults easily dismiss. When we all start caring about our world like our kids, we can make real progress in conservation and stewardship. They are my heroes.”

Troup TREEmendous will plant a tree at each school tomorrow (Friday, Feb. 19) morning in honor of the contest winners and in recognition of Georgia Arbor Day. The planting at Gardner Newman Middle School is set for 10 a.m. and Berta Weathersbee’s event takes place at 11:30 a.m. Maple trees donated by Smith Design Group will be planted at each school.

Troup TREEmendous was formed in March 2009 to promote and protect trees by teaching their benefits while preserving the rural character of Troup County. The committee supports Troup County’s Heritage Tree program, which invites residents of unincorporated Troup County to nominate trees for inclusion on a Heritage Tree Registry. Nominated trees are evaluated by an arborist and, if designated as heritage, are protected from being cut down or destroyed. Trees may be nominated on the basis of history, age, size, species or ecological value.

To nominate a tree or grove of trees, contact County Planner Nancy Seegar at nseegar@troupc.org or call her at (706) 883-1650.