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ESTES SCIENCE PROJECTS WIN SCHOOL PRIZE

Asheville, N.C. – Two fifth grade student teams from Estes Elementary School scored the highest points at the World Wide Weather Share Fair to win the competition's grand prize. The prize – a weather station camera – will be presented at Estes on Thursday, May 22 at 1 p.m.

About 80 students in grades K-5 from schools in Buncombe, Henderson, and Mitchell counties showcased their team-created projects that explored how weather impacts communities, exciting weather events in history, and what causes weather. The Share Fair took place in April at the North Carolina Arboretum.

Taking the top prize in the Upper Grades Category was the Estes Elementary "Flood" team, which showed the causes of floods, famous floods in history, community warning systems, and safety tips. The other Estes team, "Blizzards," studied the causes of these super storms and the blizzard of 1993, also known as the Storm of the Century. Both teams used resources and data they found on the Internet, including Asheville's National Climatic Data Center.

Scoring the most points in the Lower Grades Category was the "Precipitation" team from Gouge Elementary School in Mitchell County. Students in grades Kindergarten, 3, and 4 demonstrated how weather is predicted and how communities prepare for weather.

Other participating schools in the World Wide Weather Project were Glen Arden Elementary, Avery's Creek Elementary, Haw Creek Elementary, and Pisgah Elementary in Buncombe County and Dana Elementary in Henderson County.

All participating teams used Library of Congress digitized primary sources like photographs and newspaper articles to understand historic weather events, such as the Galveston Hurricane of 1900, and compare them with more recent events like Hurricane Katrina. Students explored how communities plan for weather and how severe weather impacts our daily lives, such as the April 2007 cold wave and the 2007-08 drought.

To support their study, students used the Internet-based curriculum WeatherBug Achieve, which tracks real-time data from more than 8,000 commercial-grade weather tracking stations in the United States. A tracking station of this type was planned as the Share Fair grand prize. But because Estes Elementary already has one, the camera will be awarded to enhance their system with live images.

The World Wide Weather Project is administered by An Adventure of the American Mind (AAM), with cooperation from Buncombe County Schools, Mars Hill College, and WeatherBug Schools. AAM trains K-12 teachers, college faculty, and librarians how to incorporate the digitized primary resources of the Library of Congress into classroom instruction. The AAM Program is made available through a Library of Congress grant funded by the U.S. Congress.

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