

PSATS Youth Awards Contest



BY **BRENDA WILT** / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Four groups have won recognition in PSATS' 2017 Youth Awards Contest, established to honor the valuable contributions young people make to their communities.

Each winning group received a \$500 cash prize and a framed certificate, presented at the convention of their respective county association of township officials.

PSATS created the awards in 1978 to honor the youth-oriented programs that improve the quality of life in townships and encourage youth involvement in local government. The Association will mail flyers about the contest next spring to county associations, member townships, Boy and Girl Scout councils, school districts, Future Farmers of America, and 4-H Clubs through the Penn State Extension Office.

For more information about the Youth Awards, call Brenda Wilt at PSATS at (717) 763-0930, ext. 123, or email bwilt@psats.org. Townships may also go to www.psats.org, choose the "Programs & Services" tab, and click on "PSATS Award Programs."

Highlights of the winning projects follow. ♦



Fifth-Grade Class at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School, Doylestown Township, Bucks County

The fifth-grade students undertook a research project to find ways to reduce residential water use, which will save money and conserve a vital natural resource. The students:

- measured water use in their homes based on time and flow rates for various activities, such as showering, dishwashing, and doing laundry;
- developed educational messages and materials to share with their families;
- presented a tutorial to their families on water use and ways to save;
- posted reminders in their homes; and
- monitored and recorded water use.

The students achieved an average savings of 300 to 500 gallons of water per week per household. After presenting the results to the Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors, the class created an informational flyer that the township can distribute to the community.



Full Heart Charity, Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County

The Full Heart charity, founded by eighth-grader Casey Scheaffer, held the Full Heart Kids Carnival to raise funds for A Soldier's Hands, which sends hand and lip care products to active, overseas service members from the area. Casey and 30 area youth planned, coordinated, and ran the carnival. The young people:

- sought permission and support from the Lower Makefield Township Board of Supervisors and worked with various township departments;
- advertised the carnival by distributing flyers and conducting in-school promotions;
- solicited individual and corporate sponsors; and
- set up for the carnival and ran or coordinated the food sales and games, raffles, and other activities, including a bounce house and pony rides, and then did all the cleanup.

All of the carnival's proceeds, minus expenses, were given to A Soldier's Hands, which was created by Trish Shallenberger, a soldier's mom and former Lower Makefield Township resident.



Boy Scout Troop 2114, Conemaugh Township, Somerset County

Led by Eagle Scout candidate Robert Romanow, the troop replaced a makeshift concrete pipe fire pit with a newly designed and constructed block pit and concrete surround at a township park for use during flag retirement ceremonies and other events.

After presenting his project to the board of supervisors for its approval, Romanow and his fellow Scouts got to work. With the help of skilled adults, Romanow and the troop:

- solicited donations from individuals and area businesses;
- laid out the area for the concrete pad and built the forms;
- excavated the area, graded it, and added gravel;
- set the forms in place, installed wire mesh, and poured the concrete;
- landscaped around the concrete pad; and
- constructed the central fire pit.

In addition to being used for the flag retirement ceremony, the fire pit will be available to other organizations and the public as a gathering place at the park.



Penns Valley Youth Center, Gregg Township, Centre County

During the annual Serve Camp, the young people of Penns Valley Youth Center undertook several projects at the Old Gregg School Community and Recreation Center. The youth:

- removed a wall in the fitness center;
- reconfigured and reorganized the community library;
- cleaned out and landscaped the planting beds around the building;
- painted a newly constructed pavilion; and
- planted vegetables in the community garden.