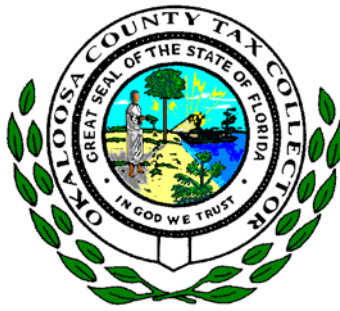


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**PRESS RELEASE**

**KIDS TAG ART PROGRAM HELPS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

April 26, 2017

Press Release 17-07

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**Shalimar, FL** – At the Okaloosa County School Board meeting this week, 5<sup>th</sup> grade art students were all smiles as they waited to hear their names announced in front of the packed Board room. The recognition came from Okaloosa County Tax Collector Ben Anderson as he presented the Kids Tag Art Award of Distinction winners, two each from twelve participating schools.

The Kids Tag Art program is a partnership between the Tax Collector’s Office and the School District and has garnered close to \$31,000 for participating schools since it began four years ago. As an art project, this program gives students a chance to create their own specialty license plate. As a fundraiser, those student created plates can be purchased by parents and the public, and the proceeds from all school sales stay in that school.

Ben Anderson says, “With Tag Art sales and sponsorships, the Kids Tag Art program this year collected \$11,073.65 for participating elementary schools. This is non-tax generated revenue and comes at a time when money for art curriculum is hard to find.” He continues, “We were delighted to partner with Superintendent Mary Beth Jackson in offering this fundraising opportunity to the elementary schools. We were also very fortunate to have the support of our sponsors as well and would like to thank Florida Heart Research Institute, Fudpuckers, GCOP and Corporate Benefits.”

New this year, students could pick the “Heart Smart Art” theme from which the Florida Heart Research Institute chose 3 art pieces that represented having a “health heart.” Winners are Zipporah Oswald, Alexis Felker and Ava Pierce. The Tax Collector’s Choice award is from Bluewater Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grader, Lauren Amans. Anderson and Amans are pictured (attachment) placing her winning tag on his vehicle. Anderson said he will have her tag on his vehicle until another winner is announced next year.

<b><u>Antioch Elementary:</u></b> Jazlyn Polanco Gabrielle McGriff	<b><u>Bluewater Elementary:</u></b> Rylan Sorensen Bella Pretz	<b><u>Bob Sikes Elementary:</u></b> Christina Baltimore Ethan Myers	<b><u>Florida Heart Research Institute’s “Heart Smart Art” Winners:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zipporah Oswald – Elliott Point</li> <li>• Alexis Felker – Liza Jackson Preparatory</li> <li>• Ava Pierce – Shalimar</li> </ul> <b><u>Tax Collector’s Choice Award Winner:</u></b> Lauren Amans, Bluewater
<b><u>Edge Elementary:</u></b> Arianna Dali Keller Nelson	<b><u>Elliott Point:</u></b> Elijah Oswald Evelyn Schultz	<b><u>Florosa Elementary:</u></b> Kamryn Neely	
<b><u>Kenwood Elementary:</u></b> Adriana Lampon Casey Oglesby	<b><u>Liza Jackson Preparatory:</u></b> Jasmin Aare Rachel McQuaid	<b><u>Northwood Elementary:</u></b> Justin West Peyton Johnson	
<b><u>Riverside Elementary:</u></b> Desirae Esmond Mackenzie Askew	<b><u>Shalimar Elementary:</u></b> Alizabeth Hill Jacob Shepard	<b><u>Walker Elementary:</u></b> Aleigh Jernigan Hana Caruso	

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