

Green projects prove gold for Canberra entrants



WINNERS: From left, back row: Wendy Cave and Steve McGrath, of Farrer Primary, Elizabeth Davey, of Kaleen Primary, ACTION's Peter Wallace, Nick Garben, of St Clare's, Rebekah Gupte, of Hawker, Terry Shaw, of The Village Building Company, Chris Hastings, of Gilmore Primary, and Russell Watkinson, of Urban Services. Middle row: Viv Pearce and Glenys Patulny, of Kaleen Primary, Penny Flett, of Theodore Primary, Sarah Livingstone, 18 and Katherine Cooper, 16, of St Clare's, Niranjn Gupte, 8, Rhiannon Jackson and Diane Overall, of Hawker Primary, Gareth Row, of Gilmore Primary. Front row: Sian Willoughby, 15, Liam O'Riordan-Smyth, 14, Luke Stringer, 14, Kate Wilson-Woolley, 14, Yael Sasson, 14, and Paul Totterdell, of Orana School. Pictures: LANNON HARLEY

By Tamara Glumac

A school which has slashed its garden water use by two-thirds, a project aimed at curbing illegal graffiti and a school recycling program which has led to a dramatic reduction in rubbish have won accolades for commitment to environmental conservation.

A handful of businesses, schools, government agencies and community groups across Canberra were presented yesterday with Inaugural Keep Australia Beautiful ACT Sustainable Cities Awards.

The awards recognise individual and group achievements and aim to promote environmental endeavours and sustainability within the ACT.

Among the winning initiatives were the Department of Urban Services Parks and Places graffiti art workshops, designed to curb illegal graffiti by providing outlets for youth to express artistic talents.

Local schools took out a number of awards for projects based around sustainability, water conservation and resource efficiency.

The Sustainable Schools award, sponsored by *The Canberra Times*, was jointly won by Farrer Primary School and Gilmore Primary School.

Farrer Primary School's environment centre, which has worm farming, chickens and a

ACHIEVERS:

From left to right, back row: Chris Hastings, Gareth Rowe, Nick Garben, Steve McGrath, Wendy Cave.

Middle row: Glenys Patulny, Elizabeth Davey, Viv Pearce.

Front row: Sarah Livingstone and Katherine Cooper.



vegetable garden, has extended into the community, with pupils encouraging parents to recycle and compost green waste at home.

The school recycles 90 per cent of its organic waste, produces its own fertiliser and eggs and students are taught environmental sustainability.

Gilmore Primary School has worked on gardening projects through a mentoring scheme known as the Gilmore Improvement Friendship Teams program.

They established a greenhouse, a fern garden, worm farm and are building garden beds for each class to grow vegetables and flowers.

Gilmore Primary School deputy

principal Gareth Rowe said the school was also becoming more waste-wise on a broader scale, which had contributed to a 50 per cent reduction in rubbish.

And at Orana School, which was highly commended in the Water Efficiency category, a water harvesting system has dramatically reduced the use of town water for its grounds and gardens.

"We use about a third of water we would otherwise use," project consultant Paul Totterdell said.

Keep Australia Beautiful national chair Don Chambers said he was pleased by the strength of sustainability initiatives in the ACT.

THE HONOUR ROLL

■ **Community Pride category** — Winner: Department of Urban Services Parks and Places, Graffiti Art Workshops. Highly Commended: Department of Urban Services Parks and Places, ACT Graffiti Management Strategy; and ACT Planning and Land Authority, Canberra Spatial Plan.

■ **Environmental Innovation** — Winner: Department of Urban Services Parks and Places, Yarralumla Creek Community Restoration Project 2005. Highly Commended: The Village Building Company, The New McKellar.

■ **Water Efficiency** — Highly Commended: Orana School, water harvesting project.

■ **Resource Efficiency** — Winners: Hawker Primary School and Theodore Primary School, Waste Wise program.

■ **Sustainable Transport** — Highly Commended: ACTION, Flexibus service; and ACT Planning and Land Authority, Sustainable Transport Plan.

■ **Sustainable Building** — Winner: Canberra Airport, Brindabella Business Park.

■ **Sustainable Schools** — Winners: Gilmore Primary School, Gilmore improvement friendship teams mentoring program; and Farrer Primary School, Environment Centre. Highly Commended: St Clare's College and Kileen High School.

■ **Young Legends** — Highly Commended: Vaughn Melano, Engineers Without Borders.