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SCHOOLS

Environmental club earns Brevard honors for cleanups

BCC volunteers removes trash on local beaches

BY GEORGE WHITE
FLORIDA TODAY

PALM BAY — Joining up with Keep Brevard Beautiful to get more volunteers at weekly beach cleanups has scored big for the Environmental Club at Brevard Community College.

Beach cleanups had always been a part of the activities for the 50-member club founded seven years ago, said club sponsor and biology teacher Susan Phillips.

But the effort truly ramped up about a year ago when the club teamed up with KBB on weekly public cleanup events on five South Brevard beaches, she said.

Lead volunteers at those sites included Phillips and BCC staff member Billy Fried, and club members Dale Yeager, Michele Walchi, David Baker and Brooke DeRosa.

"We had always done a road-way cleanup, a beach cleanup and a river cleanup in Turkey Creek. About a year ago, we started partnering with KBB and we really raked up a lot of hours in the com-

munity," Phillips said. "We would get about 10 to 15 volunteers out each week with everything from high school students working on their community service hours for Bright Futures, to elementary students and adults."

The popular club also takes snorkel trips to the Keys, camps out in Ocala National Forest and helps pay for its activities with proceeds from plants grown in a campus greenhouse.

Recent awards include:
■ Recognition from the Turtle Coast Sierra Club for Outstanding Contributions to the Environment. The group also awarded environmental club member Joe Galzarza a scholarship for National Service Trip to work in a national forest in New Mexico.

■ KBB awarded the club the 2006-2007 Litter Reduction and Control Award.

■ BCC Center for Service Learning award to Phillips for excellence in combining academic scholarship and community engagement.

■ Honorary membership in Indian River Resources Council Club.

"There are a lot of students here who have huge commitment in the community and the environment," Phillips said.
For information about the BCC

Site map

The beach clean up sites, cleaned on a rotation, include:

- The Boardwalk at 5th Avenue, Indianatic;
- Bicentennial Park and Pelican Beach Park, both in Indian Harbor Beach;
- Hightower Beach and Seagull Park, both in Satelile Beach;
- North Spessard Holland and Ocean Avenue parks in Melbourne Beach;
- Coconut Point Beach, located just north of the Melbourne Beach Public.

Environmental Club, call 433-5289. For information about Keep Brevard Beautiful, call Beach Program Coordinator Linda Nichols at 631-0501. ■

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George White, FLORIDA TODAY

Club cache. Sue Phillips, biology teacher and sponsor of the Brevard Community College Environmental Club, displays some of the awards won by the club this year. Involvement with Keep Brevard Beautiful beach cleanups helped the 50-member club earn the recognition.