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Arbor Day Celebration Awards Poster Contest Winners Event Marks Ten Years Since Tornado Hit Salt Lake City

Salt Lake City, Utah -- Ten years have passed since a tornado struck Salt Lake City destroying dozens of trees from Downtown to the Avenues. A gathering at Memory Grove Park today acknowledged the restoration efforts that have been made since then. Lieutenant Governor Gary Herbert, State Forester, Dick Buehler, Meteorologist, Kevin Eubank and Smokey Bear joined with winners of this year's Arbor Day poster contest to plant a tree and to renew Utah's pledge to do the same.

Doyoun Park, a 6th grader at Quail Hollow Elementary in Sandy, is the Grand Prize winner of the 2009 Utah State Arbor Day poster contest. Doyoun's poster is the cover art for a 12-month calendar which features other state poster contest winners including 18 other elementary schools from around the state.

The state's 5th grade winner, Emma Wardle, had her poster entered into the national Arbor Day poster contest and won the national online popular vote. She receives national recognition and a plaque from the Arbor Day Foundation.

Other state winners are Shalice Clark, Leo J. Muir Elementary, Bountiful; Benjamin Keller, Grandview Elementary, Ogden; Gillian Rogers Perkins, Colby School, Park City; Britney Sanchez, Colby School, Park City; Macie Gunnell, Wasatch Elementary, Provo and Nicholas Jensen, Hillcrest Elementary, Orem.

The contest is designed to educate students about trees and environmental stewardship. The 2009 theme, "Trees are Terrific... in Cities and Towns!" is designed to increase student's understanding of the importance of trees in a community.

Meridith Perkins, urban forester for the Utah Division of Forestry says, "Arbor Day brings out the best in people. Planting a tree is such a tangible way to make a difference in the community and improve the environment. Plus," she adds, "everyone can do it. So, whether you're 5 years old or 105, get involved and join the tree planting effort."

Sponsors of the Arbor Day Celebration are the National Arbor Day Foundation, Utah Nursery and Landscape Association (UNLA), Rocky Mountain Power, Alpine Art, TreeUtah, USU Extension, Utah Society for Environmental Education and Red Butte Garden. More than 39,000 schools participated by holding contests at a school level which, in turn produced 480 entries for the state contest.

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