

Mesa announces Plastic Bag Round-up Recycling Challenge results



Special to the Independent

Braxton Liebig

Working in partnership with Mesa Public Schools and Bashas' and Food City supermarkets, the city of Mesa hosted a Plastic Bag Round-up Recycling Challenge from March 8-April 2 in honor of Earth Day on April 22.

Elementary students at all Mesa Public Schools located within the city of Mesa were challenged to bring in their no-longer-needed plastic grocery bags to help their class and/or school become the top recycler. City officials announced the following results:

- The goal of the challenge was for Mesa elementary students to collect and recycle 120,000 plastic grocery bags. However, students embraced the challenge and collected 535,904 bags.

- 34 Mesa elementary schools officially participated in the plastic bag recycling challenge.

- Top School: Falcon Hill Elementary School was awarded with a framed Earth print for collecting 55,445 bags.

- Top Class: Ms. Hall's/Ms. Ruth's third grade class at Brinton Elementary School was awarded an Earth Day plaque for collecting 11,007 bags. Reusable bags were also awarded to the students, courtesy of Bashas' and Food City supermarkets. The students will also be featured on an upcoming billboard ad on a city recycle truck.

- Top Boy: Braxton Liebig, a fourth grade student at Falcon Hill Elementary School, was awarded a bicycle, courtesy of Honest Tea. Braxton will also be featured on an upcoming billboard ad on a city recycle truck, will appear in the April 28th issue of the Bashas' weekly circular and will receive a one-hour ride in a city garbage truck.

- Top Girl: Madison Harmon, a third grade student at Salk Elementary School, was awarded a bicycle, courtesy of Honest Tea. Madison will also be featured on an upcoming billboard ad on a city recycle truck, will appear in the April 28th issue of the Bashas' weekly circular and will receive a one-hour ride in a city garbage truck.

The plastic bags were taken to the Bashas' warehouse on Earth Day and will be baled and sent to a plastic recycler. Even though the challenge has ended, Mesa residents are encouraged to continue recycling their plastic grocery bags by taking them back to their



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Madison Harmon

local retailer including their neighborhood Bashas' and Food City grocery store. Source reduction is an even better option and can be accomplished by reducing the number of grocery bags used or by using reusable bags instead.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, approximately 2.9 million tons of bags, sacks and wraps were generated in 2008 but only 390 thousand tons were recycled, equaling a 13.4 percent recovery rate.

For more information about the Plastic Bag Round-up Recycling Challenge, visit www.mesarecycles.org.

Editor's note: This information provided by Mariano Reyes, community outreach specialist for the city of Mesa.



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Students at Brinton Elementary were awarded a plaque for their efforts throughout the month of March and April on Earth Day.

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85202
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