



Press Advisory

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2002 Citizens' Environmental Coalition Synergy Awards A Night to Celebrate Environmental Progress

On Tuesday, October 1st, 2002 the Citizens' Environmental Coalition (CEC) Synergy Awards will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in the Medical Center.

It is no secret that the Houston/Gulf Coast region faces enormous challenges as it seeks to balance sound economic growth with sound environmental practices. As part of its effort to foster dialogue, education and collaboration on environmental issues, the CEC created the Synergy Awards, a lively evening that focuses not on all the problems but on the progress that has been made in recent years. Now in their sixth year, these awards recognize achievement, hard work, and/or resourceful stewardship in a broad spectrum of environmental endeavors.

Who: The CEC, Award Recipients, Supporters and Houston Community

What: The 2002 Synergy Awards For Environmental Excellence

When: Tuesday, October 1, 2002 from 6:30 to 9:30 pm

Where: The Crowne Plaza Hotel in the Houston Medical Center

This year's winners are:

Army and Sarah Emmott Environmental Conservation Award: Winnie Burkett

A biologist with a specialization in ornithology, Winnie Burkett serves as Vice president of sanctuaries and manager of coastal sanctuaries for the Houston Audubon Society. She was responsible for the acquisition of land in the Bolivar Flats to protect this habitat for thousands of shorebirds.

Environmental Education Award: Jennifer Malone

A teacher at the Nature Discovery Center in Bellaire, Jennifer Malone has shared her love of nature with children, fostering a strong foundation in scientific method and a respect for living things.

Media Award: Mike Wright and Dan Lauck

Mike Wright, reporter with *The Facts*, a Brazoria County daily newspaper, consistently writes in-depth stories on relevant environmental topics. His reports on air quality issues in particular demonstrate a willingness to challenge both public misconceptions and the official line by putting forward alternative viewpoints.

Citizens' Environmental Coalition

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Citizens' Environmental Coalition

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KHOU Channel 11's Dan Lauck has built a reputation for presenting well-researched pieces on regional environmental topics, including environmental enforcement, industrial emissions, ozone formation, toxic mold, in-car exposure to pollution, and toxins in dry cleaning and nail salons. Lauck's participation in the recent special on statewide environmental issues was particularly impressive.

Corporate Awareness Award: HEB

In addition to its active recycling program HEB supports the community, donating \$500,000 to promote environmental education efforts across Texas. Their green building program ensures that measures are taken to protect the natural habitats around new stores and to conserve energy and building materials.

Community Activist Award: Jim Blackburn

Attorney Jim Blackburn has a long-standing record of taking on powerful companies and interest groups in the name of environmental protection. Blackburn, who is founder of the environmental law and public interest planning lawfirm Blackburn Carter and current chair of the Galveston Bay Conservation and Preservation Association, has fought numerous legal battles over the years, from cleaning up Formosa Plastics to stopping the deepening of the ship channel, Bayport, and the Katy Freeway expansion.

Founders Award: Barrie Zimmerman

The Houston environmental community lost a great visionary and activist this year. Barrie Zimmerman was a founder of Citizens Who Care, which eventually developed into the CEC. She is also known for her work in urban development, particularly for her role in renewing downtown's Market Square.

President's Award:

Well-known as a collaborator, David Crossley has long-worked to bring people and organizations together to improve the quality of life in the Houston region. As founder of the Gulf Coast Institute, he leads and facilitates the Smart Growth/Livable Communities movement in the area.

Government Award: Harris County Flood Control District

Over the years, the Harris County Flood Control District has developed into an agency that proactively supports natural flood management techniques and the creation of accessible open space. Programs like the New Frontier project, through which the agency purchases the right-of-way to large tracts of land, promise the bayou of the future will be winding and tree-lined.

Sustainable Planning Award: The Woodlands Operating Company

Recognized by the *Houston Chronicle* as "the perfect example of smart growth," the Woodlands' businesses and homes are tucked away among acres of lush forest. Through its responsible planning, the TWOC has created a thriving commercial center with more than 1,000 businesses, while maintaining 100 miles of hiking, biking walking and jogging trails.

A social hour including cocktails and hors d'oeuvres begins at 6:30 pm with entertainment from the South American music ensemble, *Sur*. The awards ceremony is scheduled from 8:30 to 9:30. Tickets cost \$75 for individuals and \$500 for a table of six; the price includes parking. This event will include excellent photo opportunities. For more information, contact the CEC at 713.524.4232. Further information can be found on the CEC website at www.cechouston.org.

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