

Baker County Celebrates "Hands On Georgia Week"

10/16/2009



Submitted Photos/Adults, L to R:
Aide Trudy Watson, 3rd Grade
Teachers Janice Tipper and Bonnie
Walton, Dougherty County
Extension Agent James Morgan.



Adults, L to R: Jeanette King, Janice
Tipper, Mattie Christian, Trudy
Watson, Clara D. Coe, Rosa
Hawkins, Hattie Carter, Essie
Hightower, DeeDee Burnum, Eldrew
Coe, Tammie Hawkins, 4-H
Students: Montrez Daniels,
Stephanie Bowens, Kahila Davis,
Edward Guy and 4-H Assistant
Carrie Hall (& Board of Education
Member), Melanie Shiver, Lakeshia
Hawkins, Kathy Henderson, Belinda
Hayes, Bonnie Walton, and Baker
County School Principal Daniel
Lovering.



L to R: Baker County 4-H students
Stephanie Bowens and Kahila Davis
with Pat Williams (center)

On Friday, Oct. 2th, Southwest Georgia Master Gardeners joined Baker County third grade teachers and students to lead off Baker County's celebration of Hands On Georgia Week 2009. Baker County Primary School students, teachers, and staff, along with Baker County 4-H students and community volunteers pitched in to help. Baker County School Principal, Mr. Danny Lovering, began the event by welcoming the crowd and he thanked everyone for their dedication, hard work, and help with this important project.

Starting with few resources, but with a dream, Baker County third grade teachers, Mrs. Bonnie Walton and Mrs. Janice Tipper, and their students have worked tirelessly to create an outdoor classroom garden that incorporates a memory garden for 2 young students, Kierra Crumbley and Kursty Thomas, whose lives were tragically lost in a 2007 tornado. The garden is designed to engage young students in order to help them succeed by teaching them math, science, gardening, teamwork, and so much more through the real life applications of their lessons in the garden.

Hands On Georgia is an opportunity for the Baker County Southwest Georgia Master Gardeners and others to partner with the third grade teachers and students to work on something of lasting importance. For the third year the Baker County Southwest Georgia Master Gardeners have coordinated this event with a cleanup and planting day in the garden. Extension Agent, Sylvia Davis along with other representatives from the Baker County Cooperative Extension Service, Carrie Hall, Pat Williams, and 4-H students, Stephanie Bowens, Montrez Daniels, Kahila Davis, and Edward Guy were present to help, along with Master Gardeners, Carla Heard, Ruth Fountain, and Suzanna MacIntosh.

Special thanks goes to Dougherty County Extension Agent, James Morgan, who began this year's celebration on Monday with a special lesson for the third grade students on "Beneficial Insects" that was designed to help them with their work in the garden. Extra special thanks go to community volunteer Jerry Henderson and Master Gardener Kenny Kimbrel for their many hours of service in the garden.

During Hands On Georgia Week citizens in all 159 Georgia counties spend hours selflessly dedicating themselves in service to their communities. Georgia's Electric Membership Corporations, The Home Depot, and Wal-Mart generously sponsored this year's event. This week of service ran from September 26th through October 3rd. Hands On Georgia was launched in 2004 with initial investments from Coca-Cola, Home Depot, and the Woodruff Foundation.

The Southwest Georgia (SOWEGA) Master Gardener Association is coordinated through the Dougherty County Extension Office under the



Master Gardener Carla Heard with students

leadership of Urban Horticulture CEA James Morgan. The Association includes members from Baker, Dougherty, Lee, Mitchell, Sumter, Terrell, and Tift counties.