

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Gulf of Mexico Program

Office of Public Affairs ♦ Bldg. 1100, Rm. 220F ♦ Stennis Space Center, Miss. 39529-6000
(228) 688-1159 ♦ Fax: (228) 688-2709 ♦ E-Mail: hines-smith.terry@epa.gov ♦ www.epa.gov/gmpo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 28, 2003

MARGARET FRICK WINS 3RD PLACE GULF GUARDIAN AWARD

STENNIS SPACE CENTER, Miss. – The Gulf of Mexico Program recently announced that, Margaret Frick, with the Ed White PTA Environmental Committee in Seabrook, Texas, will receive a third place Gulf Guardian Award for 2003 in the Individual Category. The award will be presented to her at the Southern States Environmental Conference and Exhibition scheduled Sept. 23-25, in Biloxi.

Four years ago the Gulf of Mexico Program developed the Gulf Guardian awards as a method of recognizing and honoring the businesses, community groups, individuals, and agencies that are taking positive steps to keep the Gulf healthy, beautiful and productive. The Gulf of Mexico Program began in 1988 to protect, restore, and maintain the health and productivity of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem in economically sustainable ways. Award entries were received from Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. A first, second, and third place award are given each year in six categories – individual, business, youth and education, nonprofit organizations, government, and partnership efforts.

“Our oceans and coasts are precious resources,” said Jimmy Palmer, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regional Administrator in Atlanta. “Coastal and marine waters provide some of the most diverse and biologically productive habitats on the planet,” he added. “This year’s Gulf Guardian Award winners are doing their part to keep these valuable resources healthy and productive.”

“It was an amazing experience to see a team of volunteers come together and make a watershed education program from scratch,” said Gulf Guardian Award winner Margaret Frick. “The PTA Environmental Committee raised thousands of dollars, installed a schoolyard wetland, trained every Ed White Elementary teacher on watershed education, taught more than 580 students to be watershed stewards, and reached out to the entire community to help the Galveston Bay watershed. We planned, laughed, had margaritas, got dirty, cajoled, learned, taught, coaxed, sympathized, pushed, and pulled and got it done. It was awesome! I'd strongly encourage everyone to volunteer to help the environment. You can make a difference!”

Margaret Frick joined the PTA Environmental Committee in 1999. She wrote most of the Watershed Stewardship Program for Ed White Elementary Parents and Teachers. Galveston Bay Estuary Program awarded the committee with \$13, 500 to implement the watershed program. Margaret Frick was instrumental in many ways to instill a love for the environment and inspired others to learn more about the Gulf of Mexico, Galveston Bay and the local watershed. She has volunteered thousands of hours working with students, parents, teachers and community volunteers. The wetland habitat -- two ponds -- that she designed and installed with volunteers was described as “awesome” by one of her many fans.

Gulf of Mexico Program Office Acting Director Bryon O. Griffith said, "Our 2003 Gulf Guardian Award winners are to be commended for taking action to preserve and restore the Gulf of Mexico." "One out of every six jobs in the United States is marine-related, generating \$54 billion in goods and services annually. Protecting these waters makes sense economically, aesthetically, and environmentally. Acting as one community to protect our one and only Gulf of Mexico is essential to our way of life and our standard of living."

For a list of all the Gulf Guardian Award winners for 2003, visit the Gulf of Mexico Program web site at <http://www.epa.gov/gmpo> and click on the Gulf Guardian Award button on the left.

The Gulf of Mexico Program is underwritten by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is a non-regulatory, inclusive consortium of state and federal government agencies and representatives of the business and agricultural community, fishing industry, scientists, environmentalists, and community leaders from all five Gulf States. The Gulf Program seeks to improve the environmental health of the Gulf in concert with economic development.

-30-

Editor's Note: For more information about the Gulf Guardian Awards and the Gulf of Mexico Program, call Terry Hines Smith at 228-688-1159. For more information about the award winner, call her at 281-474-5732.