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Provincial Schools Over the Top in Top Your Total Recycling Contest

Schools in Newfoundland and Labrador have once again demonstrated their commitment to improving our environment by recycling a whopping 4.2 million used beverage containers as part of the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board's (MMSB) Top Your Total School Contest. As a result of the contest, schools reduced our province's carbon emissions by more than 230 metric tonnes, which is equivalent to planting over 210,000 trees.

"I extend sincere congratulations to the more than 200 schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador that participated in the Top Your Total School Challenge who collectively recycled an amazing 4.2 million beverage containers during the month of March," said the Honourable Terry French, the Minister of Environment and Conservation and the Minister Responsible for the MMSB. "I would like to congratulate all these schools for helping protect our environment, and in particular I would like to congratulate Northern Lights Academy in Rigolet, the grand prize winner of the contest, for mobilizing an entire community and showing that a small school in a remote geography can play a big role in protecting the environment."

Launched in March, the Top Your Total School Contest was open to all K-12 schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The contest challenged schools to recycle more beverage containers during the month of March than their average monthly number of containers recycled during the previous school year.

"We know the youth of our province are already environmental champions, but it is still very encouraging to see such a fantastic response to the contest," said Leigh Puddester, Chair and CEO, MMSB. "All of the children, their teachers and those that participated in the contest should be very proud of their efforts. In fact, we had such a positive response to the contest that we decided to add an additional level of prizing for the school in each of the four regions of the province that recycled the largest volume of beverage containers."

The MMSB offered a Gold prize of \$10,000 to the school that had the highest percentage increase over their previous Top Your Total figure. In addition, the MMSB offered the top-performing schools from the four regions of the province a \$2,000 cash prize, and each school that exceeded their total from last year also received an extra five cent payment for every container above the Top Your Total figure. Through the contest, the MMSB is making a financial contribution of more than \$600,000 to schools province-wide.

Winners of the Top Your Total School Contest are:

\$10,000 Gold Winner: Northern Lights Academy, Rigolet

\$2,000 Silver Winners:
(Highest Percentage Increase)
Perlwin Elementary, Winterton - Avalon
John Watkins Academy, Hermitage - Central
Main River Academy, Pollard's Point - Western
Eric G. Lambert, Churchill Falls - Labrador

\$2,000 Silver Winners:
(Largest Number of Containers)
Crescent Collegiate, Blaketown - Avalon
Exploits Valley Intermediate, Grand Falls-Windsor - Central
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Corner Brook - Western
Menihek High School, Labrador City - Labrador

"Contests like this reinforce stewardship outcomes that we teach in science classrooms where students from K-12 are encouraged to have a sense of personal and shared responsibility for the environment," said the Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Education. "I want to acknowledge all students who took part in this initiative and I am confident they will continue these efforts in their schools, and communities."

Oliver Jacobs, Principal of Northern Lights Academy, said that winning the Top Your Total School contest was made possible through the efforts of the entire community of Rigolet.

"We are proud of all of our students, teachers and the entire community for supporting our school to help us top our total," said Mr. Jacobs. "Our entire community has demonstrated that the collective efforts of a small group of people can have a big impact."

Since 2002, more than 120 million beverage containers have been collected and diverted from Newfoundland and Labrador landfills through MMSB's school recycling program and as a result schools have raised more than \$12.5 million in recycling refunds and matching grants provided by the MMSB. Schools have reinvested those funds in a wide range of environmental and educational initiatives. MMSB's school recycling program is one of the largest sources of fundraising for schools throughout the province.

The MMSB is a Crown agency of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. MMSB supports modern waste management practices in the province with a particular focus on waste diversion and recycling in order to ensure a clean and healthy environment throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

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