

## CHANGE THE WORLD

Broward County students at the 2012 Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education, pages 4-5.



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## Quarter-century commitment: 25 years at Wheelabrator

By MEAGHAN CASEY

The course of mechanic Kevin Travis' career has spanned two coastlines over two decades, but his dedication to Wheelabrator and Waste Management (WM) has remained constant.

Travis, hired by WM in 1987, recently marked his 25th anniversary with the company. He originally

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**KEVIN TRAVIS**

By MEAGHAN CASEY

After 25 years at Wheelabrator, Ganeesh Siewrattan, operations manager at the South Broward plant, still continues to challenge himself every day.

"I'm happy here," he said. "There's a good mix of people, and there are always new opportunities. The older the plant

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**GANEESH SIEWRATTAN**



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# Success stems from our employees

**JIM EPSILANTIS**

In this edition, we would like to highlight our workforce and our community. We are lucky to have some exceptional members of our team at both plants— from the longest-serving, 34-year veterans to our newest employees who are still learning the ropes. As each of our employees could tell you, it is an exciting industry with many opportunities for advancement.

In terms of our community, Broward County has always shown us tremendous support in providing

us a home since this plant's inception. We recognize it is our job to be a responsible corporate neighbor, which is why we are eager to step up and support the efforts of organizations such as Partners In Education and SOS Children's Villages – Florida. We are also thrilled to support the middle-school students from New River, Sawgrass Springs and Westglades who participated in the annual Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education. It was a pleasure to attend this year's event and

watch them shine.

It was also a wonderful opportunity to invite some first-time visitors to our plant this year as we celebrated Earth Day. Part of what makes this job fun is seeing the looks of amazement on the faces of our youth as we introduce them to the waste-to-energy process.

Remember that our doors are always open if you, too, would like to stop in for a visit.

*Jim Epsilantis is plant manager at Wheelabrator North Broward.*

## New possibilities for progress

**SCOTT MCVLAINE**

Welcome. In this edition, you will be introduced to some of the community organizations we are proud to support, such as the EASE Foundation and the Davie Chamber, as well as some of our hard-working employees whom we celebrate. At both plants, we have a number of employees who have reached milestones, and in this edition we are celebrating those who have reached 25 years. A quarter of a century with this company is quite an

accomplishment and I commend both Ganeesh Siewrattan and Kevin Travis for their dedication. I also commend our Safety on Purpose™ grand-prize winner for 2011, Owen Duval, who is one of our most diligent employees.

Inside, you will also read about the annual Symposium for Environment and Education, which was held right here in Broward County in May. The three teams of middle-school students from Broward County never cease to

impress and awe us when they deliver their presentations. I can only imagine what the future holds for these talented young men and women.

To learn more about our Broward plants, visit [www.poweringbroward.com](http://www.poweringbroward.com). Thank you for your continued support, and best wishes for an enjoyable fall season.

*Scott McIlvaine is plant manager at Wheelabrator South Broward.*

## DUVAL HAS MET THE CHALLENGE FOR 10 YEARS

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Ten years ago, Owen Duval came on board at Wheelabrator South Broward on a temporary basis, and never looked back. He is now a full-time laborer, responsible for water and ash control.

"I enjoy working with the heavy-duty pumps and other hydraulic equipment," said Duval.

Duval moved to the U.S. from Kingston, Jamaica, in 1987 and worked in the construction field before joining Wheelabrator.

"Wheelabrator is a great company," he said. "It gives me the means to provide for myself and my family, and it's a fulfilling work environment."

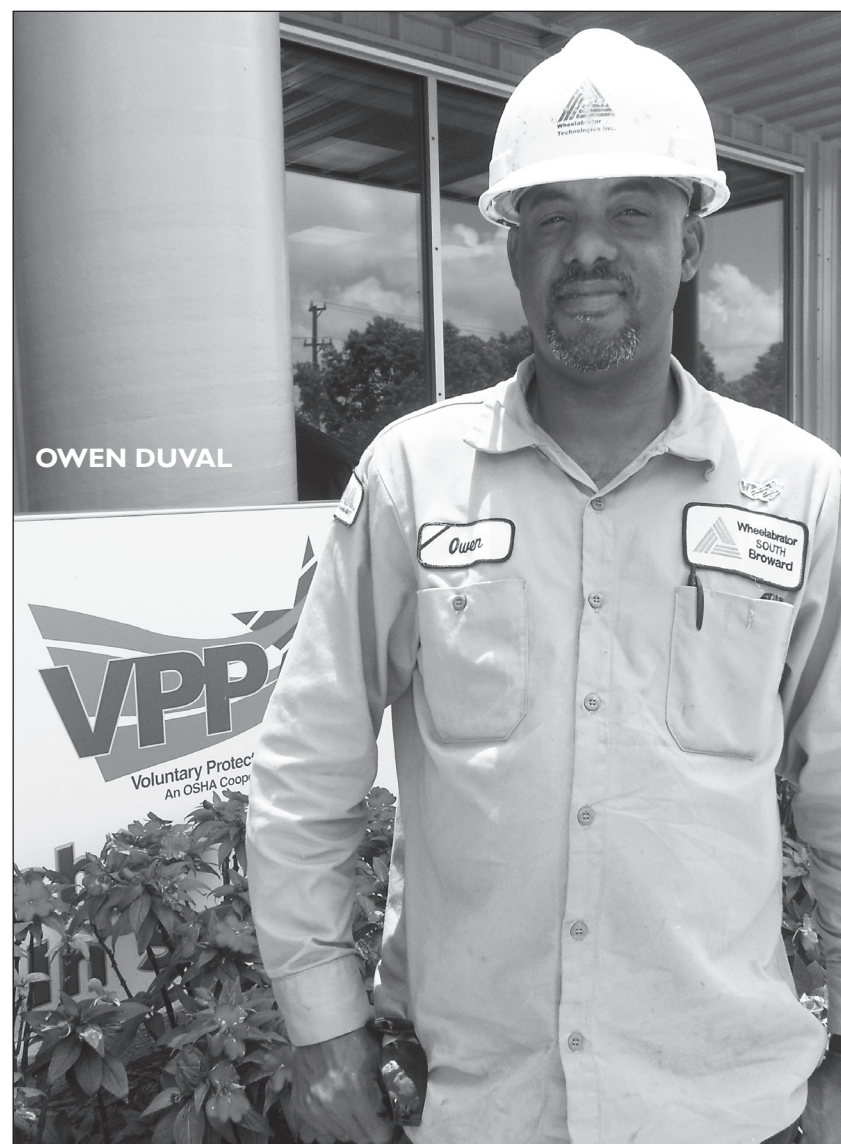
"He's probably one of the hardest working guys at the plant," said Plant Manager Scott McIlvaine.

Duval, who is deaf and mute, has a dual challenge when it comes to communicating, but he has never let it hold him back.

"Every day is a challenge, not only for me, but also for my co-workers," he said. "We always work through any communication issues either by writing or sign language. Texting is also a great way to communicate."

Duval was one of the plant's top five point accumulators for 2011 in the Safety on Purpose™ program, intended to recognize and reward positive safety performance. On a daily basis, before performing a task, every employee is charged with the task of asking three questions: "Do I know how to do the job safely? Am I prepared to do the job safely? Can I do it safely?" They must also record in their notebooks at least one positive action per day taken to promote safety, and carry that notebook as a reminder that they can do every task, every day, safely on purpose.

Employees who are recognized for their positive actions accumulate points and are rewarded with a spin on the Safety on Purpose™ wheel, for a chance to win prizes. Duval won the year-end spin-off for the top five and was rewarded with a 55-inch television. Other top earners included Robin Bell, Martin Bitner, Patrick Gayle and Frank Harris. They each received a \$100 gift card.





# Swindell a smooth operator on land and sea

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Plant Operator Ken Swindell has mastered the corporate ladder during his 18 years at Wheelabrator North Broward. Swindell, who was hired at the plant as a truck driver, has progressively moved up in ranks to serve as assistant utility operator, utility operator, crane operator, assistant plant operator and, eventually, plant operator – a position he has held for the past nine years. As such, he is responsible for monitoring and controlling the boilers, turbines and auxiliary plant equipment from the control room to maintain safe, efficient and continuous plant operations.

“It’s a good company to work for if you want to put your time in and move up the line,” said Swindell. Before joining Wheelabrator, Swindell, a native of Hollywood, worked for Florida Power and Light at Port Everglades, where he first gained experience as a plant operator.

“Coming here, it was a whole different industry – waste-to-energy – so I had to learn from the bottom up,” he said. Outside of the plant, Swindell, an avid fisherman, has taken an active role in the Cooperative Tagging Center’s volunteer tagging program, operated through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In the past six years, he has tagged more than 25 large, oceanic fish.

“I’ve been fishing all my life, and I love it,” said Swindell. “Swordfish is my game, though I’ll catch marlin and sailfish too.” In 2008, Swindell claimed the state record by capturing a 650-pound swordfish in 1,800 feet 10 miles south of Port Everglades.

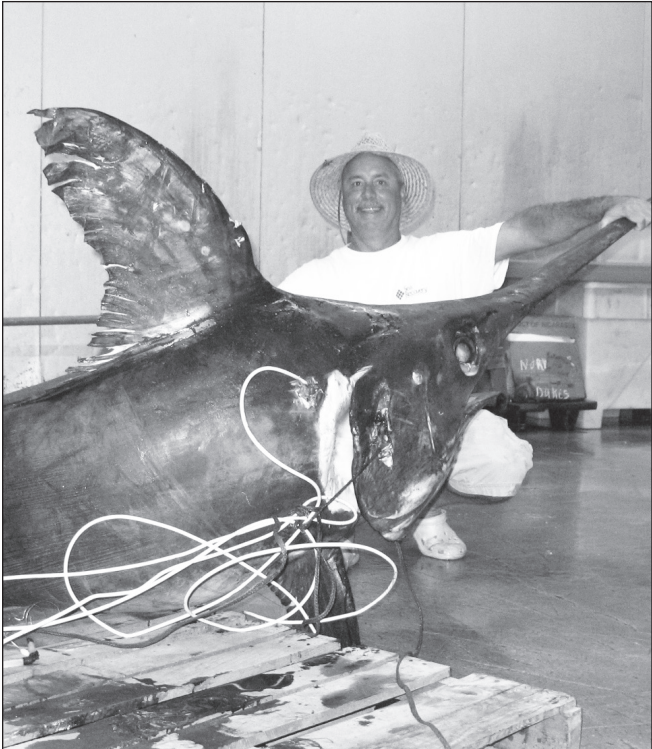
More recently, in August 2011, Swindell tagged a 45-pound swordfish, which, when he recaptured it three months later, weighed in at 55 pounds. The tagging helps scientists to determine fish migratory patterns, define their populations and, if possible, estimate their growth rates, population sizes and mortality rates.



Ken Swindell started as a truck driver for Wheelabrator North Broward 18 years ago and is now plant operator.

“Such information is required to determine the need for, and guide the planning of conservation measures,” wrote Eric Orbesen, a fishery biologist at the Cooperative Tagging Center, in a letter to Swindell. “Your continued cooperation in tagging your catches, and returning tags which with complete and

accurate recapture data, will add to our knowledge and help to secure the optimum utilization of these priceless resources.” Swindell and his wife, Jill, reside in Sunrise. They have two daughters, Shayna and Summer, both of whom also enjoy fishing.



Swindell holds the Florida state record for a swordfish catch.



Many of Swindell’s catches are tagged for research purposes.



Swindell’s daughters, Shayna and Summer, also enjoy fishing.





Jason Grant presents for Sawgrass Springs. His team focused on vermicposting, or using worms to break down food scraps.



Fabien Cousteau speaks at the Wheelabrator Symposium.



Judge Nina Randall with hydroponically grown vegetables from Westglades.



Brandon Mather, Keyla Correia and Kegan Becker of New River.



Daniel Cuellar presents New River's beach restoration project.



Jazmine Arzula of Westglades at the Miami Seaquarium.

# Broward County students shine at Wheelabrator Symposium

“Be the change you want to see in the world. Pass it on.” That was the inspiring message with which students from Sawgrass Springs Middle School in Coral Springs closed their presentation at the 18th annual Wheelabrator Symposium for Environment and Education.

The Sawgrass Springs team joined 120 other members of a rising “green” generation who came forth to share their ideas at the four-day event in Sunrise, held April 30-May 3.

Through the Symposium, middle-school students representing New England, the mid-Atlantic and Florida commit to a six-month learning project, identifying an environmental challenge in their community and developing a long-term solution. Under the guidance of educators and Wheelabrator employees, students apply lessons learned in the classroom to real-life situations and come together to present their projects and solutions to a panel of educators, government officials and local community volunteers at the event.

“In 18 years, more than 2,000 students have come through this program,” said Linda Sapienza, director of community relations for Wheelabrator. “These students make a real difference. One of Wheelabrator’s core values is to make a positive difference in the communities where we operate. I want to commend our participants for following through and helping to make our communities more sustainable and better places to live.”

“It’s incredible to see the impact these students have on the world,” sent Kent Wallace, director of physics at Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn., who served on the panel of judges. “It’s proof that it’s not just the adults who are the agents of change. It’s those who choose to take on that challenge, which these young people have.”

Of the 13 teams that participated this year, three represented Broward County: Sawgrass Springs in Coral Springs, New River Middle School in Fort Lauderdale and Westglades Middle School in Parkland.

New River students worked to restore the beach community at John Lloyd State Park, cleaning up trash, particularly aluminum cans and plastics, and educating the public on how to properly dispose of monofilament fishing lines. They also continued the work they began last year with Plant a Fish™, collecting mangrove seedlings, cultivating them in their school lab and planting them along a three-mile stretch of shoreline.

The Sawgrass Springs team focused on vermiposting, or the practice of using worms to break down food scraps. Students hosted a booth at Coral Springs Earth-fest, where they made edible worm dirt with younger children. Throughout the remainder of the spring, they continued to weed, mulch and plant new shrubs and trees and fertilized everything with organic worm tea from their worm bin. In addition, the team members built on the work started by previous Symposium participants by re-stocking the lake with fish and releasing two gopher tortoises back into the wild.

Westglades students adopted Screech Owls from the Sawgrass Nature Center and Wildlife Hospital and built owl boxes to distribute to the local elementary schools as a part of Earth Day. Fourteen boxes were assembled and distributed in the Parkland City area. The students also established a hydroponics lab of organically grown vegetables.

“The support from Wheelabrator, year after year, and the hands-on experience these students are getting is incredible,” said Westglades teacher Stella Shelby.

Participating schools each received \$500 in startup funds and received a \$1,000 donation from Wheelabrator at the conclusion of the event. In addition, students can later qualify to earn a four-year scholarship through Wheelabrator’s partnership with Fisk University.

The Symposium wrapped up with a visit to the Miami Seaquarium and an awards dinner, featuring speaker Fabien Cousteau, third generation ocean explorer and founder of Plant a Fish™.

“It is the job of each of us to pass to the next generation a passion for studying the environment and provide support to them to make a difference to improve the planet,” said Cousteau. “If we don’t encourage our kids to be better stewards than we are, what will they inherit? I commend Wheelabrator for providing the opportunity to these students to conduct these research projects, and I am so impressed with their creativity and willingness to implement their solutions.”



From left, New River students Kegan Becker, Marjorie Rice, Sebastian Hineostroza, Park John U. Lloyd Beach State Park Services Specialist Carmen Duesler, Keyla Correia, Brandon Mather, Daniel Cuellar and Zachary Brown.



From left, Sawgrass Springs students Hannah Kornitsky, Bobby Malone, Dylan Parker, Nicolas Sarmiento, Nicholas Henning, Heather Errede, Mateo Sarmiento and Jason Grant.



Seated, Westglades students Jasmine Arzula and Kelli Pagano. Standing from left, Karen Malkoff, Liliana Pardo, Taylor Lickey, Chi Leminh, Allex Barcellos, Catherine Huntley, Emily Bonner, Stella Shelby, Emily Mitchell, and Westglades Principal Jack Vesey.





Chris Bird, the water lab technician, points out the new water filtration system, close up at left, that allows the plant to use filtered wastewater in boilers.

# North plant reduces water usage by 88 percent

By MEAGHAN CASEY

For years, Wheelabrator North Broward has brought in wastewater from the county’s North Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant to be reused for purposes such as cooling or landscaping. Thanks to a reverse osmosis water filtration system, the plant is now able to use that same wastewater in its boilers, where the combustion of trash and recovery of energy in the form of

high-pressure steam takes place. Reverse osmosis technology, which is used by most leading water bottling plants, applies hydraulic pressure to counteract natural osmotic pressure and drive out pure water. “It allows us to take all of the minerals and impurities out,” said Chris Bird, the plant’s water lab technician. “We’re basically taking sewer water and transforming it into something pure to feed our boilers. You

have to get past the stigma of where it came from, but it’s clean enough to drink. It’s amazing.” The process is allowing the plant to rely on tertiary water for all of its water process needs, and it is no longer drawing millions of gallons of water from the Biscayne Aquifer, which supplies Miami-Dade, Monroe and Broward counties with their primary source of fresh water. The plant unveiled the new filtration system in late 2010.

In the first year of operation, the system reduced city water use by 47 million gallons – an 88-percent reduction over historical use. “The system performance has met all expectations,” said Plant Manager Jim Epsilantis. “It’s a win-win because almost 50 million gallons of tertiary water can be put to good use and the fresh water that we were using is available for residential and community use.”

## WHEELABRATOR IN THE COMMUNITY: SUPPORTING BROWARD COUNTY



Partners in Education Executive Director Nina Randall and Sally Alvarez of Wheelabrator at ClueLess on Las Olas.

### CLUELESS ON LAS OLAS

More than 450 amateur sleuths gathered in March on Las Olas Boulevard in hopes of solving the 17th annual ClueLess on Las Olas murder mystery. For several hours, hundreds of South Florida locals purchased hints and searched for clues that would lead them to the killer of a bride-to-be in this year’s “Til’ Death Do Us Apart” wedding-themed mystery. With Wheelabrator Broward again serving as presenting sponsor, the event raised approximately \$16,000 for Partners In Education, Inc., the premier school-business partnership program in Broward County. The fundraiser also included a silent auction and a raffle for participants. The funds will benefit Partners In Education’s Targeted Recruitment Program, which aims to improve student achievement in Broward County Public Schools. “We love Wheelabrator,” said Nina Randall, executive director of Partners In Education. “We’re so grateful for their support in sponsoring ClueLess on Las Olas and for their long-standing commitment to Broward County Public Schools.”

### SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGES—FLORIDA

Wheelabrator Broward showed their support for SOS Children’s Villages—Florida again this year as a platinum sponsor of the Hope & Home Gala Celebration, held on April 21 at the Mercedes-Benz of Delray. The annual event, offering an evening of dancing, dining, casino games, an auction and even a red carpet walk for the guests, serves as SOS Florida’s biggest fundraiser of the year. This year’s event raised more than \$380,000 to support activities, programs, mental health counseling, life skills classes, and tutoring for the 75 boys and girls living in the foster homes of the Village. “Thank you for your support as we once again celebrate our children and the wonderful place of healing, hope and home our Village provides for them,” said SOS Chief Development Officer Debbie Levine.

The Coconut Creek Village, an eight-acre cul-de-sac consisting of 12 houses and a community center, offers refuge for abandoned, abused or neglected children who have been removed from their homes by the Florida courts. SOS offers unique placement opportunities for siblings, allowing them to live together and maintain a sense of family, rather than separating them into different foster homes. The average SOS foster child remains in the Village for approximately two years before being returned to their biological family or finding an adoptive home. Additionally, the Village offers an 18+ After Care program, which aids young adults in their transition from foster care to life on their own. Wheelabrator Broward has long supported the SOS Children’s Villages organization through gifts and sponsorship support at events. The SOS organization, in existence since 1949, established the Broward County Village in 1993 after receiving significant support from Wheelabrator in the form of a \$100,000 donation. Linda Sapienza, Wheelabrator’s director of community relations, serves on the organization’s board of directors.



Wheelabrator South Broward Plant Manager Scott McIlvane with EASE Executive Director Linda Owen at the plant.

### EASE FOUNDATION

For more than 15 years, Wheelabrator South Broward has supported the Emergency Assistance Service Effort (EASE) Foundation, a grassroots-oriented organization established to assist those residents who are trying to help themselves. “We are here today because of the business community and residents of Davie,” said Linda Owen, executive director of the EASE Foundation. “It is a neighbor-helping-neighbor organization.” EASE steps in when emergencies happen, such as an accident, illness, loss of job or loss of home. The organization focuses on preventing homelessness, but it also reaches out to the homeless with food, clothing and hygiene supplies. Each quarter, Wheelabrator employees deliver canned goods and other needed supplies to help fill EASE’s food pantry. The company also donates toys at Christmas and sponsors EASE’s annual Humanitarian of the Year Award luncheon. “Wheelabrator’s support is extremely important because it saves us so much money,” said Owen. “We count on them to come through when we need them, and on behalf of all the people we help, I’d like to thank the people and all the staff there for their support. It means a lot to us.”



# Quarter-century commitment: 25 years at Wheelabrator



Kevin Travis has worked his way from fourth-class to first-class mechanic in 25 years at Wheelabrator North Broward.



Ganeesh Siewrattan started at Wheelabrator Bridgeport before transferring to the South Broward plant during its construction, logging 22 of his 25 years with the plant.

## Travis is first-class mechanic

### TRAVIS from Page 1

worked for WM Recycle America in California before transferring to Broward County, where he started out at Southern Sanitation, a WM facility in Pompano Beach that provides residential solid waste collection services.

In 1993, Travis was hired by Wheelabrator North Broward during the plant's startup stage. He started as a fourth-class mechanic and has since worked his way up to become a first-class mechanic.

"I've seen this facility evolve and get better all the time," said Travis. "It feels good to be here for a while. I can offer feedback or advice about things we've already tried. It's like being the historian."

A retired serviceman in the active Reserves, Travis has been activated to serve in the Middle East, Haiti and Georgia during his two and a half decades of employment.

"Wheelabrator took care of me and my family and supported me through all three activations, reassuring me that my job was always here," said Travis. "There's no question they take care of their employees."

Travis is currently pursuing his interest in the safety side of the business, and is participating in the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)'s Special Government Employee (SGE) Program. The program was established to allow industry employees to work alongside OSHA during Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) onsite

evaluations. Qualified volunteers from VPP sites are eligible to participate in the SGE program and must be approved by OSHA and funded by their companies to participate. After submitting an application and completing the required training, the volunteers are sworn in as SGEs and are approved to assist as VPP on-site evaluation team members.

*"The safety culture here is second to none."*

As an approved SGE applicant, Travis has completed a three-day OSHA training course that provided an overview of the program and the roles and responsibilities of an SGE. Inspired by the experience, he is now enrolled in Southern Columbia University's online program to earn a degree in occupational health and safety.

"The safety culture here at Wheelabrator is second to none," said Travis. "With Safety on Purpose™, we've been trained to be alert and always ask questions. It's engrained in me. I do it at home now too."

Travis and his wife, Anna, reside in Pompano Beach. The couple has three sons.

## Siewrattan is right at home

### SIEWRATTAN from Page 1

gets, the better it runs, because we're always making improvements."

Originally from Trinidad, Siewrattan got his start at a refinery in Louisiana before he was hired as a control room operator at Wheelabrator's Bridgeport (Conn.) plant. After three years in Bridgeport, he transferred to South Broward during the plant's construction in 1990.

During his tenure, Siewrattan has worked as shift supervisor and operations superintendent and was promoted to operations manager five years ago. He prides himself on the fact that he never misses a work day, even holidays.

"I've been working in plants since I was 19 years old," said Siewrattan. "It's not only my hobby, it's my home."

Siewrattan traveled to China this spring and has plans to return for another seven months to help streamline operations of a plant managed by Shanghai Environment Group (SEG), a joint venture between Wheelabrator and Shanghai Chengtong Holding. The organization has a total of eight facilities in various stages of construction and operation. Siewrattan will be working with Chris Carey, SEG deputy general manager and the former Wheelabrator general manager and regional vice president, who was based in Florida from 2002 to 2011.

"I'm excited about the opportunity," said Siewrattan, who traveled to Amsterdam three years ago for a similar trouble-shooting

project. "I enjoy new challenges."

*"The older the plant gets, the better it runs, because we're always making improvements."*

Siewrattan, who lives in Margate, has five sons, two of whom also work for Wheelabrator. His son Davin is a plant operator at the North Broward plant and his son Raj is a lead electrical and instrumentation technician at Wheelabrator Ridge, located between Lakeland and Auburndale in Polk County. Together, the three family members have given 43 years of service to Wheelabrator.





Quiet Waters Elementary School received \$2,000 from Waste Management for attending the WM Earth Day celebration.

## Earth Day celebration brings students to North Broward plant

With a focus on renewable energy, more than 1,000 students and their families from four local elementary schools participated in an Earth Day celebration hosted by Waste Management at Monarch Hill Renewable Energy Park, where they toured the Wheelabrator North Broward facility and the Monarch Hill landfill.

"This was the third year we've invited the local community in for Earth Day to experience what we do here at Monarch Hill Renewable Energy Park," said Dawn McCormick,

community affairs manager for Waste Management. "We wanted the students to come away with a clearer understanding of our environmentally sound practices and leading-edge technology that produces enough clean,

renewable electricity from waste at this site alone to power more than 50,000 homes locally per day."

In addition to tours of the plant and the landfill, students participated in hands-on recycling, renewable energy and environmental-related

*We wanted students to come away with a clearer understanding of our technology.*

activities. For fun, they made an "edible landfill" out of layers of crushed graham crackers, fruit roll-up liner, cookie crumb dirt and candy.

The event also raised funds for each school's PTA. Waste Management awarded \$2,000 to Quiet Waters Elementary School for registering the most students at the event. Winston Park Elementary School received \$1,500 and

Sanders Park Elementary School and Margate Elementary School received \$1,000 each.

Participating in the check presentations to the schools were Broward County Vice Mayor Kristin Jacobs, Deerfield Beach Mayor Peggy Noland, Margate Commissioner Lesa Peerman and Broward County School Board member Nora Rupert. Broward County Commissioner Chip LaMarca and Pompano Beach Vice Mayor George Brummer also joined in the festivities.



Students met Cycler, the WM recycling robot.



North Broward Plant Manager Jim Epsilantis teaches guests about sustainable energy.