

FAIR LAWN COMMUNITY NEWS

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Walk-a-thon highlights environmental projects by students in Fair Lawn

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Fair Lawn — Lyncrest School kicked off its annual walk-a-thon on May 29 by celebrating the projects done by the school's environmental club this year.

Deborah Kempin and Sonyhe Ko, the Environmental Club advisors, shared a video with students. It highlighted some of the work by the club and the school to help the environment.

"We are really excited to share our journey this year," Kempin told students who were dressed in green.

The video shared facts about pollution and ways to help the environment. It showcased members of the environmental club doing activities that helped the school earn a bronze award from the National Wildlife Federation's Eco-Schools USA program.

"We at National Wildlife Federation and Eco-Schools USA are proud of the example set by Lyncrest School for New Jersey, other schools, and the country at large," said Laura Hickey, senior director of Eco-Schools USA. "This award demonstrates not only a commitment to sustainability and environmental literacy for students and faculty, but an appreciation that the best, most effective education transcends the classroom and offers a hands-on approach to learning."

To win the bronze, Lyncrest had a host of sustainability initiatives. The school held a fall and spring cleanup with the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission, participated in a plastic bottle-cap collection campaign, created a bottle-cap garden and took part in the Fair Lawn Green Fair.

As part of the Eco-Campus Partnership Program, students at Lyncrest also communicated with De Chong Elementary School in Taiwan.

Ko explained that because of the time difference with Taiwan the schools exchanged messages about waste and pollution. The iEARN Collaboration Centre provided an online platform where teachers and students can interact, collaborate and share photos, videos, documents and presentations.

"The more we teach them, the more power we give the children," said Kempin.

The school conducted a litter-campaign with Memorial Middle School students and collected 50 pounds of plastic bottle caps. The bottle caps were used to create pieces of eco-art.

"They learned you can take something and create something new," said Kempin.

Students made wooden objects like a tree, butterfly and snail, painted them and then decorated them by drilling the bottle caps into the wood. The eco-art, which was on display during the walk-a-thon, will be displayed in the gardens around the school.

Kempin said the environmental projects got started because Principal Maria Corso had a vision.

"She inspired many of the teachers," said Kempin.

The outdoor area behind the school serves as a learning area for students. Just that day third-graders had class in the area.

The program concluded with students beginning the Earth Day Walk-a-Thon, which was rescheduled because the school was closed on Earth Day. Kempin told students they are committing to walk for the next hour to show their support for the planet.

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