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## JM ECO Gears Up for Earth Week April 16-22

By Hillary Hoppock



Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School art teacher Moose Wesler worked with students, teachers, parents and community members to complete the "Continents of the World" mural. Photo provided

the mural, and with help from students, teachers, parents and community members completed the "Continents of the World" mural in December. Wesler previously used student art to create and complete both the Ancient Egypt mural on the sixth grade Core building in 2011 and the Carol Robak Teacher Memorial mural on the JM gymnasium in 2012.

To fund the mural, JM ECO used accumulated savings from the school-wide food waste diversion program developed four years ago by JM science teacher Kim Lockett. The school's three waste sorting stations operate daily at brunch and lunch to successfully divert 300 pounds of food per week. Along with other Bay Area schools and restaurants, JM's food waste goes to the Emeryville Waste Water Treatment Plant to be converted through a digestive process to energy to power the plant fully.

For the annual JM Earth Week, ECO club students plan, prepare and manage all-school lunchtime activities for a week to encourage the student body to reflect and take action on environmental challenges. This year's "AWARE" theme involves an (A) awareness scavenger hunt; (W) waste sites mapping and geotagging on a "Litterati" website (litterati.org); (A) art to create mini-turtles from walnuts and fabric; (R) recycle and reuse T-shirts to make new flags for the JM garden; and an (E) earth pledge on the school's blacktop outside the gym for students to commit to earth-healthy practices in their daily lives. Students who participate every day in Earth Week events receive an earth-themed snow cone.

JM ECO is in its sixth year and continues to involve students, staff and the community in events and activities to raise consciousness and offer opportunities for earth "wise" action. As noted in the Jane Goodall quote in the upper right corner of JM's newest mural: "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

The Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Environmental Club led a successful campaign to help save 1,352 sea turtles this fall and sponsored a "Continents of the World" ecology mural on the JM science building. This spring the JM ECO club will cap off the school year with campus-wide Earth Week events April 16-22, based on an "AWAREness" theme.

With every dollar raised saving a baby sea turtle, ECO club students organized a homeroom competition that netted \$1,352 and placed JM as the top school across the country participating in the contest to raise funds for the SEE Turtle organization. All species of sea turtles targeted for this support are listed as critical or endangered.

In 2014, the ECO club approached JM art teacher Moose Wesler about an environmentally themed mural for the school's science building. Wesler worked with the ECO club to develop the concept of the world's continents shaped by renderings of animals specific to each continent. She used ECO students' animal drawings to design

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