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BVE 4th and 5th graders AIM high to raise money for Afghan refugees

Submitted by Cathy Martinsen



After a hiatus due to COVID, Burton Valley Elementary's AIM class brought back its annual community service project, the Book Bonanza, and had its most successful year ever! The long-standing tradition put on by Ms. Martinsen's fourth- and fifth-graders is a huge undertaking. The students collect, price, and, of course, sell books . at incredibly low prices (some books are as cheap as 25 cents). All proceeds go to a charitable cause, and this year the students chose to donate the monies to help the Afghan refugees.

Jewish Family & Community Services of the East Bay is leading the Afghan Refugee Resettlement program in the Bay Area, and they are in great need of supplies and money to help these people make a new home here. The whole class banded together to complete each step in the process, and after three weeks of collecting and pricing, the sale was on. Classes from Burton Valley

Photo provided

came to support the AIM class by buying books, homemade rainbow loom bracelets, bookmarks, and origami, and dropping in donations to the donation jar. After the four-day frenzy, the students counted their money and were thrilled to find they had made \$2554.34 . the most ever raised!

The students were proud to present a check to Ami Dodson of JFCS the week before winter break. There were still many books left and several boxes were donated to the Contra Costa WIC program, while the bulk (917 books) went to the East Bay Children's Book Project. So many benefited from the Book Bonanza this year, and it was a rewarding experience for the class.

"It felt great knowing that we helped other people," agreed the enthusiastic students. Ms. Martinsen's class appreciates the support of the Burton Valley community for all the book donations as well as the subsequent purchases. It truly is a school-wide effort.

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