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Girl Scouts Making a Difference

By Cathy Tyson



From left: Members of Girl Scout troop 32959 and Eco-Warriors Camille Roth, Jessica Hennies, Anneli Svensen-Dillon, Helen Coleman, Riley Winquist, Emma Anderson, Sarah Taketa and Shea King Photo provided

Being an eco-warrior is not easy. Lafayette Girl scout troop 32959 has worked for more than a year learning about environmental challenges, identifying and taking specific actions to make a positive difference and finally telling others about ways to impact climate change, said Ann Johnston, their troop leader.

These fifth grade girls co-hosted, "Global Climate Change: Kids Making a Difference" recently with Sustainable Lafayette as the final "telling others" segment of their task. These empowered young ladies made a point of informing the approximately 150 attendees gathered at Our Savior Lutheran Church of specific environmental actions they are taking.

"Everyone here has the power to change the world - so let's begin," said one Girl Scout, kicking off the event. Next up were presenters Doug Grandt and Paul Valva from Al Gore's national organization, The Climate Project.

They have partnered with Girl Scouts of Northern California - the end result being a kid-friendly presentation on global climate change that was well received by the audience.

A chorus line of charming Scouts talking about what individually they are doing followed, for example: turning off the computer or TV when not in use, taking shorter showers, dressing warmly instead of turning up the heat, changing light bulbs to energy efficient compact fluorescents. One first grader from Lafayette Elementary said, "I walk to school because cars are bad for the environment."

Fifth grader Samantha Taketa spoke about the problem of plastic bags - less

than 3% end up being recycled, they aren't biodegradable and they strangle sea animals. She had a huge ball of 1,000 bags as a visual aid to demonstrate how many the average American family uses in a year. She humbly suggests that families choose re-usable tote bags instead.

In addition, the Scouts worked hard on a variety of educational displays, "By kids, for kids" illustrating a number of simple concrete actions that can make a difference. Other displays from Cool the Earth, Alliance for Climate Education, ECO lunchboxes, Kids vs. Global Warming could be found along the perimeter of the large room.

"After all their hard work and planning, the girls are very proud of how well things came together. They were very excited to see and hear for themselves how many great people in our community really care about the environment and are already working to bring positive change! The girls also reported that they 'had a blast.' They are going to keep 'telling others' and will be at the Lamorinda Earth Day Festival on April 19 at Stanley Middle School with their energy, colorful displays, giant plastic bag ball and Action Coupon Books," said Troop Leader Johnston.

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