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## Burton Valley Students Return to Mural Site for Earth Day

Submitted by Mimi Bupp



To commemorate Earth Day, former students from Kyrá Rodriguez's and Mimi Bupp's second grade class at Burton Valley Elementary School gathered in late April at the site of a mural they painted two years ago. "In 2012 ..., our second grade class painted drawings of animals that live in California on a building wall outside of our classroom," wrote Burton Valley fourth-grader JoJo Bishop. "The reason we painted it was to learn all about the animals we have in California and to have fun! Also, before we painted the pictures we had written all about the animals we painted. We learned so much about them from our teachers Mrs. Bupp and Mrs. Rodriguez. We all had a really fun and great time doing it!" The mural lives on as a legacy to what they learned that year.

Photo submitted

## Water the Focus of JM's Earth Week Celebration

*"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better. It's Not."*  
— Dr. Seuss, "The Lorax"

By Hillary Hoppock



JM Students commit to everyday changes to help the earth.

Photos provided

"Water - Don't Waste It" was the theme for the fourth annual Earth Week Celebration at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School. Sponsored by the school's ECO club (Environmental Conservation Organization), the club's 25 student members planned, organized and ran lunchtime activities for the entire campus during Earth Week April 16-22, to spread the message to save water, recycle and watch out for our planet.

More than 80 students participated daily in a (W) water relay race, (A) Tie Dye Art, (T) treasure hunt, (E) education video and a (R) Reduce/Recycle Pledge. Teams of students raced to be first to fill a bucket with the drippings from a sponge in a water relay; watched "The Story of Bottled Water" video about the energy used to create and dispose of bottled water containers; answered questions about water resources and conservation in a treasure hunt; re-used and decorated "old" t-shirts with tie-dye; and pledged to take action to "save water" and be "environmentally conscious in their everyday lives."

At the end of the week, students signed pledges to "ride my bike to school," "bring a reusable bottle every day," "compost instead of throwing food away," and placed them on a pledge banner outside the school office. One sixth grade girl confessed, "I said I would take 5 minute showers and that is going to be hard, because I usually shower for at least 10 minutes." She hesitated, "But I'm going to try!"

The ECO club is serious about its mission to help the environment. For the past three years they have participated in Allied Waste's food composting diversion program, staffing three

campus ECO stations with teachers and club members helping JM's 650 students sort their daily lunchtime trash. The food waste is used to generate energy to power EBMUD plants. Per week 300 pounds of food waste has been diverted from the landfill, with a total of 34,200 pounds of food waste recycled in the three years of the program at JM.

The district's savings from one less commercial trash pickup every month has allowed JM's ECO Club to fund a Hydration Station, which has filled student's re-usable bottles to the equivalent of 21,500 plastic water bottles since its installation in 2012. All-school assemblies to educate students about environmental concerns and investments in energy-saving materials for the school site have also been funded by the savings.

The JM ECO club is an investment in the future, fueled by the energy of students and teachers at JM where during Earth Week and every week, "every drop counts!"



At JM the water buckets used for the relay were, of course, reused to water the JM Garden after the race.



"Old" T-shirts renewed with tie-dye dry in the sun during JM's Earth Week.