

Students presented Blue Planet environmental awards: projects

Students from four Milton schools went to Ontario Place last Friday to collect their Blue Planet Environmental Achievement Awards.

Robert Baldwin, Percy Merry and Our Lady of Victory schools as well as E.C. Drury High School joined 650 students from across Halton for the event that included speakers and awards presentation.

Students listened to a presentation by Dr. Melanie Watt, who set up the first and only jaguar sanctuary in Belize, Central America. Dr. Watt, who grew up in Oakville, has written a book about her work.

Paddy Torsney, Burlington MP and parliamentary secretary for the Ministry of Environment, along with Regional Chair Joyce Savoline presented the Blue Planet Awards to 14 schools. After the presentations, the students watched an IMAX film entitled 'Amazon'.

The Blue Planet Awards were started in 1991 by the Halton Region Waste Management Division to encourage students to participate in environmental projects at their schools and in the community.

The following shows what each school did to win the award.

Robert Baldwin School

Students at Robert Baldwin

School are creating the Butterfly Meadow and Peace Garden.

The project was started by expanding the existing woodlot and then creating a butterfly meadow by adding various shrubs, flowers and trees.

The school is working with a number of community partners including the Town of Milton, Nortel and local nurseries. They have also joined forces with St. Peter's Separate School.

Percy Merry School

Students at Percy Merry School participate in activities such as cross-country skiing, nature walks and gardening.

There is a school-wide, student-run composting and recycling program and all classes are involved in reducing and reusing. The students use chalk slates for printing exercises, save work to the school server, reuse paper scraps and bring reusable lunch bags and containers.

Earth literacy is one of the school's growth plan goals and the Panda Bear is Percy Merry's mascot.

Our Lady of Victory School

The school's naturalization project called 'Nature's Playground' is in its third phase.

The more than six-acre area

includes a forest, prairie meadow and a wet land. Students are planting trees, shrubs and flowers native to the area.

The grade 8 students have also designed a butterfly, sunflower, vegetable, herb and raised gardens and there is a grove of trees with seating to create a shady place to sit.

The school is also creating the Millennium Garden that will say OLV 2000 and the Peace Garden.

Each year, students join the 'Big Dig' in which they work for a day planting and maintaining their school yard. The Green Club works hard to make the projects a success.

E.C. Drury High School

Horticultural classes at E.C. Drury have built raised flower beds and planted perennials in the entrance way to the school. They have also designed the Reflection Garden with flowers that attract birds and butterflies.

The Environment Club raises funds to support Conservation Halton and Good Neighbours. The club also circulated a petition to try to stop a golf course from being developed at Bronte Creek Provincial Park. The students are currently collecting used household batteries for recycling.

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