

## COVENTRY



Photos by Kendra Lolio

Students at Western Coventry Elementary School participated in a Recycle-Bot challenge, where they assembled unique and creative robots using only recycled materials, such as egg cartons, plastic bottles, dryer hoses, and cardboard boxes.

# BUILDING BOTS

Students at Western Coventry Elementary construct unique toy robots out of recycled materials

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COVENTRY — In honor of Earth Day, students and faculty at Western Coventry Elementary School decided to kick off their month-long celebration of the planet with a friendly competition. Upon entering the building, visitors the school are greeted by a large display of handmade robots made of everything from empty paper egg cartons and soda cans to old car parts and cardboard boxes. The “Recycle Bots” were created by students on the Green Team.

The goal of the project is to get students to “make good use of their garbage” and build a unique robot that represents their personality. Students were encouraged to create the bots with the help of their parents and families, and to use materials that might otherwise be thrown away. The bots are truly all unique, with varying shapes, sizes and colors and a plethora of materials. There are bodies made of cereal boxes, eyes made of plastic cups, paper towel and wrapping paper tubes for arms and plenty of aluminum foil.

The creations were put on display just in time for the Green Team’s Family Movie Night on Friday, where students were able to watch the popular Pixar film, *Wall-E*. The movie takes place in a dystopian future, and features a small robot who collects waste on planet Earth, which has been overtaken by garbage and abandoned by mankind.

According to Kerri Luchka, who  
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# Bots

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teaches fifth-grade science at the school, in addition to creating awareness of the environment, the celebration also addresses students' social-emotional needs by fostering relationships, compassion and empathy.

"They did such an amazing job," she said. "But what's really touching is the kids were just so happy to build them with their parents."

The Green Team students also passed on their knowledge and wisdom to their peers, educating classmates on what types of material should go in certain recycling bins. For example, students

learned that plastic bags should not be placed in green recycling bins or trash cans.

"It was eye-opening to learn how big of a problem pollution really is," Luchka said. "But we also learned that it is not hopeless, and every small step helps."

Families who attended the movie night were able to pre-order seeds from the school's very own garden, including \$1 per bag of Marigolds. Students who participated in the robot challenge will also have the opportunity to do some spring planting as the weather improves over the next several weeks.

Also part of the Earth-day themed activities, Green Team students went out and took pictures of what they liked about the planet and wrote essays ex-

plaining their choices.

Everyone who brought in a bot was entered for a chance to win several prizes. Originally there was going to be a third, second and grand prize winner, but Luchka and Principal Amy Anzalone decided after seeing the bots that they simply couldn't choose only three.

"They just put so much creativity into them," Anzalone said.

"The students love coming in every day and seeing their creations on display," Luchka added. "They are very proud and love seeing all the different details on them."

*Follow Kendra Lolio on Twitter @kendralolio*