

# Boon Elementary Environmental Club **GO GREEN PROJECT**

On Earth Day 2008, Boon Elementary students in Allen, Texas participated in a school wide essay contest. The subject of the essay was "If I could make Boon more green, I would...". Student response to the contest was overwhelming! From the results of that essay contest, the Boon Go Green Project was born.

The Go Green Project focuses on six areas of "greening opportunity" identified by students:

1. Establish a student environmental club
2. Decrease wastage in the school cafeteria
3. Reduce paper waste throughout the school
4. Increase environmental education
5. Outdoor learning opportunities
6. Gardening experience and education

Thanks to the support provided by the State Farm Youth Advisory Board, our Go Green project is underway! The Boon Environmental Club was established at the beginning of the current school year. The Boon Go Green Project involves all of the students at Boon; however, the Environmental Club students are the champions and leaders of the project. We hope that this project will provide an opportunity to increase the eco-literacy of our students and instill the importance of environmental responsibility. We also plan to share what we learn by assisting other schools in our community in becoming more "green".

Here's some of what we've accomplished so far:

### Founding of the Boon Environmental Club (BEC)

A student environmental club was established at the beginning of this school year. The BEC is a PTA-sponsored club that currently has 34 student members. Any student in grades 3 through 6 may join the club. The club is led by 4 Boon teachers, PTA volunteers, and an Allen high-school student sponsor. The club meets approximately once a month. Some of the BEC activities so far this year include 3 campus/creek clean-ups and environmental lessons, touring of our city's Materials Recovery Facility (recycling center), monitoring recycling in the cafeteria, reuse craft projects (milk carton bird feeders and pinecone ornaments), weekly environmental tips on the morning announcements, and planting a school butterfly garden.



### Campus & Creek Clean-Ups

Boon student volunteers and parents have participated in 3 campus/creek clean-up events so far this school year. Boon volunteers join efforts with 2 other local organizations (Friends of Dayspring Nature Preserve and Friends of Twin Creeks III) to clean-up the Rowlett Creek and greenbelt areas from McDermott to Ridgeview. In addition, Boon students also clean-up the school campus during the clean-up events. At each clean-up event an environmental educational lesson is also presented.



### Cafeteria Recycling

We kicked off cafeteria recycling at the beginning of this school year. The program instantly was a success thanks to our enthusiastic students, dedicated parent volunteers that helped in the cafeteria the first few weeks, our outstanding custodians, and support from the City of Allen. Members of the BEC continue to serve as recycling monitors in the cafeteria, and have helped sustain the success of this program. In 2009, the sixth-graders took cafeteria recycling to a new level with a recycling contest the 6<sup>th</sup> grade BEC students created and managed. The monthly contest continues to improve recycling rates for their grade.



### Milk Carton Reuse Project

During the first month of school this year, we collected all of the milk cartons from the cafeteria as a special recycling/reuse initiative. Instead of putting the milk cartons in the trash containers, students placed them in a special collection container. These milk cartons were then used to create beautiful 3-dimensional artwork during student art classes, and also used to make bird feeders by the environmental club.



### Butterfly Garden Planting

The Boon Environmental Club students planted a butterfly garden this year. The garden will provide a learning area for all Boon students, and assist teachers in meeting science educational standards. Butterfly gardens bring the classroom outside and enable students to have hands-on opportunities with nature. Students will observe first hand the life cycle of butterflies in their natural habitat, learn about the plants that attract caterpillars and butterflies and why, and gain a greater understanding of butterfly ecology and the importance of conservation.



### Outdoor Recycling

We recently purchased recycling bins for the sport field and playground areas behind the school. This had greatly reduced the litter of water bottles and sport drink bottles in that area, and has enabled the bottles to be recycled instead of eventually reaching the landfill.

### Earth Week 2009

Earth Day 2009 is April 22<sup>nd</sup>. At Boon, we are celebrating Earth Week that entire week. We have some exciting events planned for that week, including a special ladybug project, a no-trash lunch day, a kindergarten field trip to the new Earth movie, save the rainforest t-shirt sales, and numerous environment education opportunities.

For more information about the Boon Go Green Project, contact:  
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