

# Blue Marble Initiative Launched at WCCS

**Blue Marble Initiative- held on Earth Day, April 21st at West Colchester Consolidated School, Bass River**

(Harrington Photos)

By Linda Harrington

It was a monumental celebration at West Colchester Consolidated for Earth Day 2015, as students launched the first Blue Marble Initiative.

The idea for the Blue Marble Initiative came from Dr. Karen Ewing, after she attended a Peace Conference and was challenged to make a change. She says she has always been interested in peace and the environment and came up with the idea to involve students. "It is based on the Earth as seen from space, but, as we are becoming increasingly aware, it is facing many environmental challenges. Global warming, species at risk, rising sea levels are approaching crisis levels, and actions must be taken to slow and even reverse these trends. The Blue Marble Initiative aims at raising hope in the midst of these issues."

Dr. Ewing presented the concept to the Central Colchester Regional School Board (CCRSB) and with the help of teachers Sybil Flemming and Sherry Patriquin, they were able to develop curriculum relating to peace and the environment.

"I hope students will learn from today's activities to recognize that the Earth is a small place. We have to protect it and we can make or break it for everyone else."

Students from Grades P-6 at WCCS had the opportunity to visit 19 interactive displays, aimed at increasing their awareness of their place in the natural global community.

Displays from many organizations focused on topics such as wildlife and habitat, finding Hope Spots near

home and in our province, and students participated in a variety of creative activities, all aligned with learning outcomes in Science.

CCRSB Superintendent, Gary Clarke visited WCCS during the Blue Marble Initiative and was very impressed with what he saw. "What I first noticed when I walked in was the community effort putting their best foot forward for the students," he says, "It was great to see such a huge commitment of students, staff and community working together toward improving our

environment."

Teacher's Sybil Flemming and Sherry Patriquin have been working alongside Dr. Karen Ewing for about eighteen months, ensuring all stations related to curriculum. "We have put together a wealth of information, showing curriculum links that other schools could individualize and make relevant to what their students are learning."

Mrs. Flemming has been already seeing exciting results in her classroom. "We were discussing the environment leading up to the Blue Marble Initiative and I began to hear them using what they learned to expand their own dialogue. One day about half dozen students decided on their own to do a clean-up of the school grounds. This is exactly what we are hoping will happen."

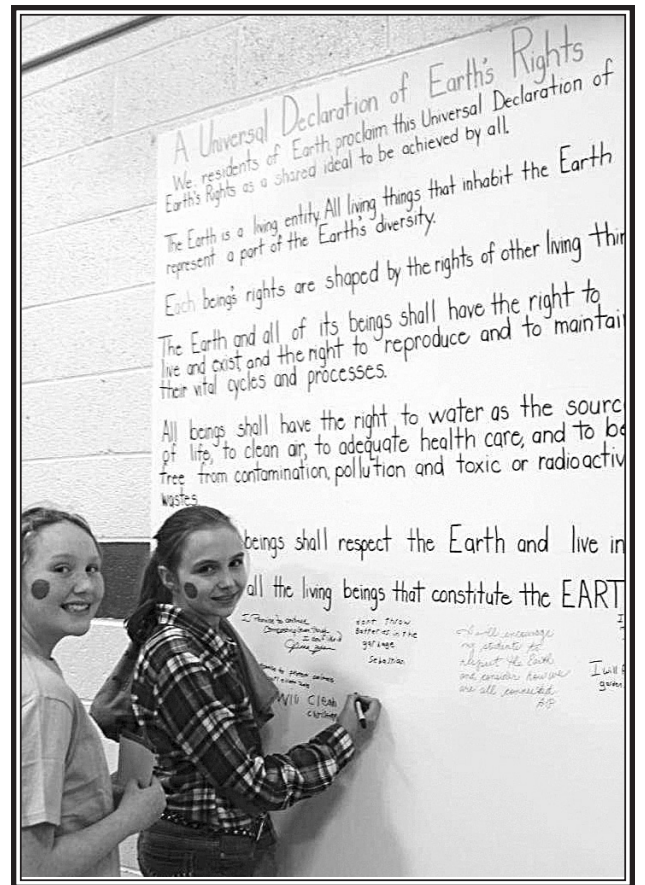
The afternoon ended with an assembly. Students came together in the center of the gymnasium and formed a model of the blue marble, earth. Each student went home with a goodie bag, including a black spruce tree seedling.



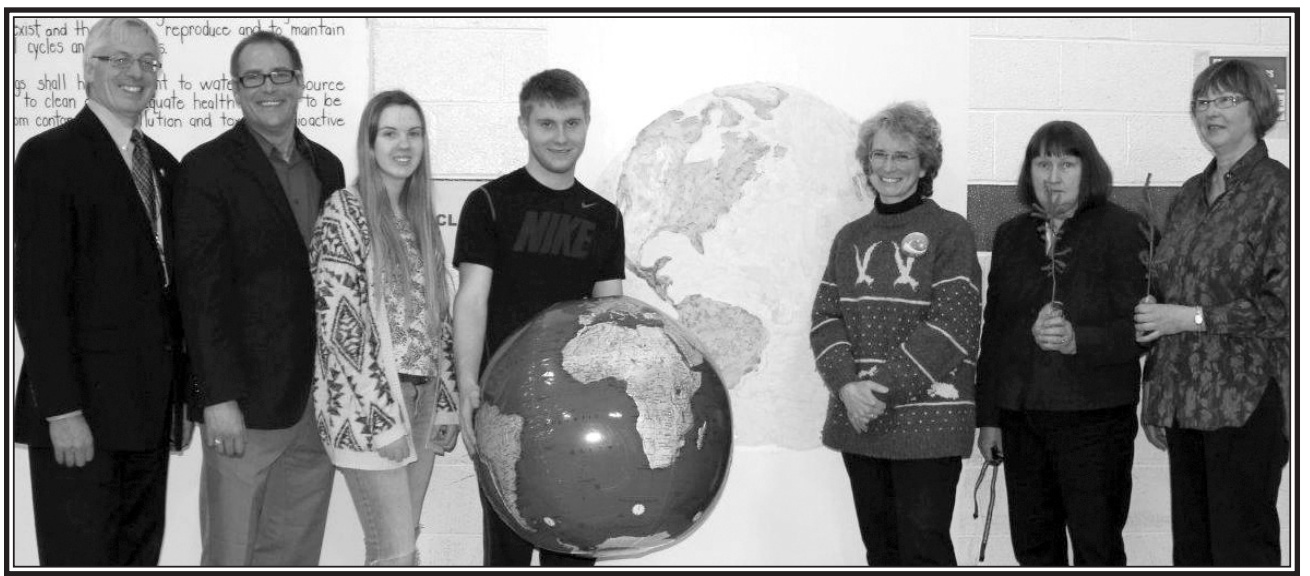
Norah McLaughlin gets her face painted with a bright earth design.



Joy Laking is helping Carl Elliott, Brad MacKinnon and Sabastian Patriquin make wild flower seed balls to take home and plant.



Maya Warman and KalebAnn Richards sign the Universal Declaration of Earth's Rights.



CCRSB Superintendent, Gary Clarke joins WCCS Principal Mr. Oakley, students Noah Tremblay and Shelby Rushton, Dr. Karen Ewing, teachers Mrs. Patriquin and Mrs. Flemming at the Blue Marble Initiative on Earth Day, April 21st.



Riley Brown reads a letter to the assembly from MLA Karen Casey in support of the Blue Marble Initiative.

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