

Students bring awareness to global warming

As environmental issues keep accelerating, many schools have created organizations that try to help and try to fix the issue.

At Annandale, this club is known as Green Atoms.

In previous years, the Green Atoms has been known for collecting recyclable items, such as paper and plastic bottles, from classrooms.

This year, the Green Atoms have a lot of new plans to try and accomplish, specifically when it comes to global issues.

Vice President of the club, junior Eileen Ngo-Tran, says that the club is trying to revitalize.

"We have roughly 83 people who currently participate in the club," Ngo-Tran says. "At meetings, all of us have been trying to come up with new ways to help the environment, and make activities more engaging so that more people will join and help."

In recent weeks, the club has had guest speakers come and talk to students about specific issues after school.

Earlier this year, the club held a session with a beekeeper who talked to attendees about the importance of having honey bees in the environment.

Just two weeks ago, Resource Director and tennis coach Hassan Mims held a session in the library.

"The people who came to these meetings were very interested, so hopefully we will be able to do more of these later on in the year," Ngo-Tran said. "We are also trying to come up with some sort of incentive with science teachers, too."

Another thing that the Green Atoms club is trying to do more is Ossian Hall cleanups.

Every once in a while, about a dozen club participants come together and clean the park and it's parking lot.

They are joined by members of Science National Honor Society

who are trying to fulfill community service hour requirements. "We always have good turnouts for these cleanups. It's very important that Ossian stays as clean as possible, so we'll probably do more of the cleanups," Ngo-Tran said.

Perhaps the biggest new thing that the club is doing this year is a plan to earn the Eco-School Award for Braddock ES.

The Eco-School is an award that is given to elementary schools for excellence in environmental action taken by the school.

Currently, the Green Atoms are working on the process with Braddock's principal, Keesha Jackson-Muir.

First, they will have to get the program to conduct an environmental audit on the school.

"The audit that will be conducted will be on issues like biodiversity, climate change, consumption and waste, energy, healthy living, healthy school, teaching students about forests, school yard forests, sustainable foods, transportation availability, water, and watershed oceans," Ngo-Tran said.

Currently, the program is in the process of auditing for waste and consumption.

The club intends to look at the infrastructure of the school, such as the presence of recycling bins and posters around the school.

"If there is a problem with one of the topics that are audited, then we'll need to have an action plan to change the issues. One example would be reusing food or making sure that untouched food isn't thrown out," Ngo-Tran said.

Despite all these new changes and plans, the club is still doing the activity that it is known for: collecting recyclables around the school.

"We can help global warming if everyone takes their part in taking steps to be more eco-friendly," Ngo-Tran says "We need to think about our planet's future, and how our actions impact it."

For people who want to join, the Green Atoms meet every Wednesday in Room 104 from 3:10 – 4:00 P.M.