

PACIFICA — Student and community volunteers added 30 trees to Pacifica's schools, all donated by the city, as part of the Pacifica's fourth annual Arbor Day celebration over the course of one week.

The main event happened Nov. 12 when more than 60 volunteers planted 20 trees at Oceana High School. The event began with a presentation in the school's Little Theatre where Principal Maritza Torres welcomed volunteers and spoke about the value trees have in helping to fight climate change.

Pacifica Mayor Mary Bier then announced the winners of the student art contest, including Granger Martini, Josie Toth, C J Long, Logan Weber, James Zeng, and Alex Macedo — all first graders at Ocean Shore School — as well as Dasha Kireev (Ortega 3rd), Brayden Bedient, (Ocean Shore 3rd), Marielle Moessinger (LMC/Home School Program 3rd), Melanie Lui (Ocean Shore 4th), Abby Pang (Ocean Shore 6th), Sabrina Lui (IBL 6th), Maya Elizabeth Warner Oca (Ocean Shore 6th) and Sophia Marie Rachael, Madeline Ly (both Cabrillo 7th).

The winning drawings will be on display at the Sanchez Art Center Nov. 11-13 and 18-20 from 1 to 5 p.m. in the foyer of the East Wing Gallery.

"We were so fortunate to have tremendous help from Oceana High School faculty and students as well as the city's Public Work staff," added Paul Totah, communications director for Tree City Pacifica, which organized the event.

He praised science teachers Peter Menard and Ryan Reidy, who led teams of volunteers. They prepared for the day with help from Jefferson School District grounds crew members Matt Barnes and Marcus Peppers as well as Public Works director Lisa Peterson and Public Works crew members Paul Lavorini, Mike Pham, Gino Assereto, Harvey Delacruz and Chris Mcdermott.

Totah also thanked three other members of the city council — Tygarjas Bigstyk, Sue Beckmeyer and Sue Vauterlaus — who lent their support and planted trees along with Mayor Bier and student volunteers.

Pacifica's new poet laureate, Toni Mirosevich, read two poems before digging began, and Patrick Hall of the Rotary Club of Pacifica, which donated money for trees and green bags, spoke about his organization's environmental work locally and abroad.

Earlier in the week, 10 other trees went into the ground at six schools in the Pacifica School District. Pacifica School District Superintendent Heather Olsen thanked principals and teachers for their planning, as well as the district's maintenance and operations team for digging the holes, Public Works for delivering the trees and students for helping with the planting. "It was a true community effort," she noted.

"The value these trees add to communities is immeasurable," added Totah. "They help to cool cities in the summer, fight climate change, filter our air, increase business to downtowns, raise property values and enhance our biotic communities by creating homes for thousands of species of plants and animals. When we feel stressed, we walk among them to ease our minds and regain our balance."

For more photos of the day and to learn more about Tree City Pacifica, go to the group's Facebook page, [facebook.com/treecitypacifica](https://www.facebook.com/treecitypacifica).

For photos:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/NH4qhQBp3prvohy29>

