

Left: Jon Yoder of Salem Environmental Education leads a discussion of the salmon life cycle at the Kid's Court.

Center: Salem Art Fair staffers LeeAnn Tandy, Teresa Flaherty, Robin Cunningham and Tabitha Teo.

Right: Volunteers from the South Salem Water Polo Club assist with recycling at the fair. PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Eco-friendliness is the goal for Salem Art Fair & Festival

BETH CASPER SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

The Salem Art Association's focus on arts appreciation, education and preservation includes embracing eco-friendly practices.

Since January of 2017, the nonprofit has been EarthWISE certified. The EarthWISE program is a free business environmental assistance program of Marion County. EarthWISE staff helps businesses recycle, save energy, reduce waste and much more. To earn certification, a business meets criteria in six areas. Salem Art Association is one of more than 160 EarthWISE nonprofits, businesses and agencies in Marion County.

At its signature event, the Salem Art Fair & Festival, the Salem Art Association seamlessly showcases unique artwork and environmental consciousness.

The 2017 Salem Art Fair & Festival drew 214 artists and 36,762 attendees. The Salem Art Association is the dedicated organization behind the Salem Art Fair & Festival, which is both SAA's largest annual fundraiser

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Salem Environmental Education offered children and their parents tours of the iconic chinook salmon at the 2017 Salem Art Fair. PHOTOS ARE SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Green

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and the largest festival of its kind in Oregon.

All of those people couldn't help but notice the zero-waste stations in the food court area, the solar energy panels attached to food booths, and the environmentally friendly activities in the kids' court.

The zero-waste stations were staffed by Garten Services and Art Fair volunteers to help educate the public about compost, recycling and trash. A total of 3,215 pounds of waste — 39 percent — was diverted from the landfill during the three-day event, according to the Garten Services post-event report.

Energy Design of Eugene powered two food booths at any given time with solar energy during the festival. The company also had a booth to educate residents about getting solar power in their own homes in Salem as well as the incentives for doing so.

In the kids' court, children built robots from aluminum cans and old washers, nuts and bolts. They also climbed inside a 14-foot-tall and 29-foot-long salmon named Claudia the Chinook to get an inside perspective on the importance of salmon as a keystone species for the environment. Each of the 11 booths in the kids' court area featured an activity that had the environment in mind.

"Next year's Art Fair promises to be even greener," said Nichole Rose, Events Coordinator for the Salem Art Association.

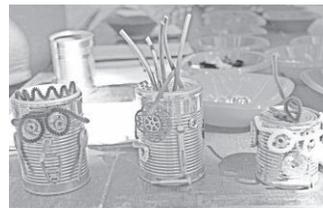
The association plans to expand the zero-waste stations at the 2018 art fair to include the beer/wine gardens and the artist hospitality area, a booth where artists can get a complimentary breakfast and receive assistance throughout the weekend.

But for the 16 employees of the Salem Art Association, the eco-friendly practices don't start and end on one weekend.

SAA's location in the Bush Barn Art Center is cleaned with green-certified cleaners and supplied with 100-percent recycled paper products. This includes copy paper, paper towels and toilet paper.

In the Bush Barn Art Center and the Annex, each of the gallery lights were switched to energy-efficient LEDs last year. Not only has it saved the nonprofit on its energy bill, it has provided brighter and cleaner lighting for viewing art as well.

Visitors to the Bush Barn Art Center can see the environmental commit-



Environmental activities for kids led to many artistic interpretations of robot art.



Garten Services assisted with organizing the first ever food waste recovery.

ment with the compost and recycling bins located next to every trash can with signs labeling each can for its appropriate contents.

"We are all in line with environmental policy here at SAA," Rose said. "We are doing everything in our power to honor the environment and be EarthWISE responsible in our workplace."

Even in art classes, the environment plays an important role. In a recent Artist History Immersion Program, 4th- and 5th-grade Title One students learned the many different ways an artist can incorporate trees with art, coinciding with the exhibition at the time, *The Nature of Things*. Students used moss and lichen in their creations and also traced their hands to make tree trunks and branches.

"It was a visual way to show that we, as humans, are connected to the environment through design and that we serve a purpose in this environment to care and nurture the ecosystem," Rose said. "We serve 12,000 students in our different art classes and workshops throughout the year. We take our responsibility to the environment seriously and we pass along those values to our students as well."

To learn more about the Salem Art Association, visit www.salemart.org. For more information about the EarthWISE program, go to www.mcEarthWISE.net or call 503-365-3188.