

# Pilot Point students to celebrate Earth Day

Pilot Point, Earth Day celebrations in America, generally held on April 22, during the past 25 years have emphasized environmental conservation and protecting public health. In rural Alaska, these concepts have long been a part of traditional Native and Indian lifestyles, as is underscored in teacher Shirley Moses' curriculum "Changing Wastes in Changing Times" recently introduced to the students of Pilot Point - a small commercial fishing community on the Alaska Peninsula.

The Earth Day community litter pick-up units the students studied included the importance of maintaining the purity of ground and surface waters as well as examining the plans for the existing sewage systems currently maintained by the City of Pilot Point. The "Changing Wastes" curriculum was recommended to the Lake and Peninsula School District through the Environmental Protection Agency/AmeriCorps Partnership program in Pilot Point and can be used as a supplement to the regular science classes offered by the district.

The concept of a "waste stream" from households to garbage dumps is a relatively new

one - less than 150 years old in some Native communities which prior to European contact threw little away and to this day still have customs that stress against wanton waste.

Students learned about reusing and recycling plastics and metal containers by decorating large coffee cans and plastic mayonnaise jars with scraps of cloth and bits of trim. The newly jazzed up containers will be collected by community volunteers and filled with lots of Earth Day goodies including vegetable and flower seed packets donated by Alaska Mill and Feed, and bird seed with instructions on how to build bird feeder by reusing plastic bottles. Afterwards the kids received their newly filled jars as a "thank you" and are eligible for additional prizes raffled off such as a large box kite and mini window-ledge greenhouses.

With concern for the environment and cooperative effort as the main themes, community volunteer and the students of Pilot Point will be working to expand their Earth Day celebration to include every day as important for litter prevention and awareness of important environmental issues.