

KEEPING TRACK

Stories in the local news and what, if anything, has happened since our last report:

AOS certification

The story: Students at Albany Options School have spent the past couple of years been working on various projects to improve the environment around them. They've planted a school garden, created recycling and composting programs, used native plants to develop a bioswale to filter the runoff from the school parking lot, and successfully applied to

become a certified Oregon Green School.

The latest: The National Wildlife Federation this month recognized AOS as an official Certified Wildlife Habitat site and thanked the school's ecology class for creating a garden space to improve habitat for birds, insects, frogs and other native species. Teacher Anna Harryman, also the school's business-to-school liaison, said the idea was to make an environment that is hospitable to wildlife by providing habitat basics: natural food, water, cover/shelter, and places to raise young. "With our bioswale alone and all the natural plants we put in last year we met the requirements," she said. AOS joins more than 150,000 certified habitats nationwide, according to the federation.

Jennifer Moody