

Beacon-Villager

Serving Maynard and Stow

Thursday, April 4, 2013

WickedLocalMaynard.com ■ WickedLocalStow.com

Vol. 53, No. 47 ■ \$2

EDUCATION

Making science cool



Lucas Koskinen, 11, and a sixth-grader at the Fowler School in Maynard, won a contest from UMass Lowell on climate change. WICKED LOCAL PHOTO/ANN RINGWOOD

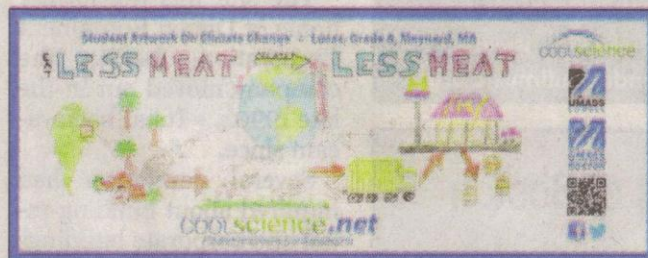
Sixth-grader recognized for climate-change project

By Danielle McLean
dmclean@wickedlocal.com

Fowler Middle School sixth-grader Lucas Koskinen will soon be showing University of Massachusetts Lowell students how indulging on

a mouth-watering hamburger is contributing to climate change.

Koskinen, 11, of Maynard, has won the state college's Cool Science Project, a campaign started by



Lucas Koskinen's artwork will be displayed through June inside Lowell Regional Transit Authority buses and terminals on a 9-foot-long placard. He was one of six local students to win UMass Lowell's Cool Science contest. COURTESY IMAGE

SEE SCIENCE, A3

SCIENCE

From Page A1

the school which allows students from kindergarten through college to create artwork that educates the public about climate change.

After learning in late February while sitting in class that he had won, Koskinen said, "I was trying to keep it in and when I got home I was jumping around. I was really excited," he said. "I learned that the environment is not doing so well right now and if I really put my mind to something I can get it done."

The contest was introduced to Koskinen's class last December, when his science teacher Pat Adams told her students they would receive extra credit if they participate.

Adams, a Maynard educator of 29 years said she often offers contest opportunities for her students. For this contest, Koskinen and two other students from her classes entered. "It gives the kids a chance to tap into skills and it tests them on things they don't necessarily tap into in the classroom," said Adams.

The contest drew about 600 students from more than 25 schools, which all created artwork analyzing a topic about climate change.

Each month a winner is selected and has their artwork displayed inside Lowell Regional Transit Authority buses on 9-foot-long placards. The art is judged on the clarity of its message, scientific accuracy, creativity and artistic appeal.

Koskinen won the contest for the month of March and his work will be on display in June. He said the project took him upwards of three-days worth of research and work to complete before he turned it into Adams.

In his research he learned that various

toxins are released into the environment during the process of making a hamburger.

He said he learned trees in South American rain forests are being cut down and turned into pasture for cows, which releases carbon dioxide into the air during the process. He said methane gas comes from cows when they release gas. After the cows are slaughtered, fossil fuels are used to transport the meat to the chain restaurants.

To help stop climate change he said restaurants should buy their meat from local farms and people should not eat as much red meat. The slogan he put on his hand-made poster said, "Eat less meat, create less heat."

"My teacher inspired me. She said it was a good idea for everyone to do this and I thought it was a good idea to help," said Koskinen. "I thought it was a good way to learn how we can help and it's also a good way for younger people to learn."

Adams said, "I didn't realize he was so artistically creative. I'm very surprised he is very good at it. He's a good student, I would like more like him."

Koskinen, an honors student said his parents Erick and Robin Koskinen and 19-year-old sister Bryn, a student at Lynchburg College are just as excited about him winning as he is.

"I don't know who was more excited, me or my parents. They are really excited for me and so is my sister."

An award ceremony, honoring Koskinen will take place at the University of Massachusetts Lowell campus on Friday.

"Anytime you can have our kids utilizing their skills in the classroom and enter into a competition or contest, its excellent," said Fowler Middle School principal Jeff Mela. "It's an outstanding honor for him. The fact that he is thinking about science is wonderful."