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HEADLINE: **City celebrates Art IS Education Day;**
Officials, parents and children turn out for the event focusing on the works of Piedmont students

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BODY:

Most days of the week, the Piedmont school community focuses on math and reading, but this past Sunday, children's art took center stage.

As part of Art IS Education Day, students from all levels displayed charcoal sketches, watercolors, ceramics, sculptures and more. There were also dance, music and dramatic performances. If a budding artist had nothing displayed, they had a chance to create their own: a bug made out of egg cartons.

"I think it's wonderful that we can come and share children's art," said Diane Deutsche, who was walking through the former Christian Science Church-turned-art gallery at 801 Magnolia Ave. with her family. "It's not every day we get to see their art work."

Her husband, Steve Deutsche, was admiring painted T-shirts, but the sculptures were his favorites.

"They should be for sale," he said.

Gary Meyer came to the exhibit because his son, a Piedmont High School senior, said there was cool art. He agreed, as he checked out paintings of fruits and vegetables that elementary students had done.

Painted eggplants and the like capitalize on opportunities for cross-fertilization, he said.

"It gets them thinking about food and nutrition and painting," he said.

Arlene Sacay walked through the visit with her son, one of the Havens Elementary School kindergartners who created an acrylic in the style of Jackson Pollack.

"I am truly impressed with what the kids can do, particularly, the sketches," she said, adding that she

can't wait for her son to blossom as an artist as some of the Piedmont high schoolers have.

Art IS Education Day is part of the annual monthlong celebration called Art IS Education, which the Alameda County Office of Education began seven years ago. March is also National Arts Education month.

To mark the Sunday event, numerous speakers were on hand, including Sheila Jordan, Alameda County schools superintendent; Nancy McEnroe, mayor of Piedmont; Ward Lindenmayer, president of the Piedmont School Board; Lisa Braver Moss, CHIME president; and Lisa Scimens, PAINTS president.

Jordan praised the Piedmont community.

"Piedmont is a leader in what has become an important movement, counter movement," she said.

She said while accountability and standards are important, "We don't want to produce just test takers."

"We also want children to be successful in the world, be creative thinkers and love learning," she added.

Lindenmayer shared a speech delivered by President John F. Kennedy on Oct. 7, 1963, which stressed the importance of the arts.

McEnroe encouraged residents to speak up if they want a permanent gallery.

Scimens presented the first PAINTS Arts Educator grants, totaling more than \$2,500, to seven Piedmont teachers and aides. The grants are intended for teachers and other staff to take courses that will teach them how to better integrate arts into their lessons.