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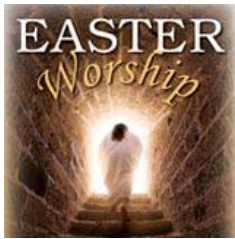
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The Clean Air Bus is traversing the suburbs with a mission of educating kids about keeping the environment clean. It features hands-on educational exhibits.

Vincent Pierri | Staff Photographer



# Clean Air Bus makes a stop at Ingleside school

By Vincent Pierri | Daily Herald Staff

Contact writer

PRINT EMAIL STORY

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You can't miss it.

Covered with rainbows, clouds, butterflies and happy-faced kids, the bright blue school bus isn't your typical yellow beast.

Hoping to plant the seeds of environmental stewardship in the minds of young people, the Clean Air Bus is traversing the suburbs.

The bus stops at schools, libraries, churches and other spots kids congregate. It made a visit to Gavin South School in Ingleside Wednesday morning.

Created by the Cook-Illinois Corp., the 45-foot refurbished school bus has a variety of hands-on exhibits designed to teach kids about conservation and the dangers of air pollution.

Awash in primary colors, the inside of the bus features interactive stations. Students learn about alternative fuel sources, air pollution and practical ways they can save the planet from environmental threats.

"We never had anything like this when I was growing up," said onboard educator David Henning. "The environment was a nonissue back then. The Clean Air Bus is making them aware."

Henning said the touchable exhibits keep the students' attention.

"They really love it, he said. "It's easy to keep their attention."

Claiming to be the largest family owned school bus company in the country, Oak Forest-based Cook-Illinois Corp. says most of its 1,700 buses run on biodiesel fuel.

They pride themselves in being an eco-friendly business, says Chief Executive Officer John Benish.

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"Our goal is to provide a cleaner and safer environment for students, but also make it a fun learning experience," he said. "We plan to educate as many children as possible on the importance of going green."



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