

By Mark Dittmar

On October 23rd, five Mountain View Elementary School students received awards for their exciting entrees in the school's annual Science Fair.

Each student had the option of entering a project of their own or a project they worked on with a classmate. All of the entrees included a hypothesis, research and/or experimentation, a conclusion and presentation of findings.

"The kids did a great job," said Mountain View Science teacher, Mrs. Cari Kinz, "I was very impressed with their projects."

After the votes were tallied, fifth-grader Cataleah Briones won First Place for her project titled, "The 5-Second Rule." In her project, Cataleah challenged the traditional idea that if food falls and remains on the floor for five seconds, it is still germ free and therefore safe to eat.

To test this common assumption, Cataleah placed a piece of a hotdog and some crackers on the floor for five seconds. After which, she swabbed them and rubbed the swab in a dish containing Agar, a bacteria growth medium. Her other food sample or "control" wasn't placed on the floor, but it too was swabbed and rubbed in a Petri dish containing Agar.

The surprising results proved the fallacy of the 5-Second Rule; *both* the food that had been on the floor and the control showed signs of bacteria. However, the sample from the floor had more than twice as much bacteria (and of different kinds than the control).

The Second Place Awards were shared by *two* teams of students. One team of fifth-graders, Britany Munoz and Grace Young thought cold water is denser than hot water and so designed an experiment to prove their hypothesis; it was titled "Water Density Experiment."

The girls filled a cup with hot water colored red and laid a slip of poster board over it. Then they filled a cup with cold water using blue food coloring, and after placing it upside down over the poster board, quickly removed the slip which allowed the cold water to make contact with the hot water. The girls had fun watching the blue colored cold water sink and the red colored hot water rise.

The second team made up of Mariah Lerma and Aleshka Davis, also fifth-graders, was curious about the formation and the inner workings of volcanoes. In their exhibit titled, "What is a Volcano?" The students displayed their research, diagrams

and a hand-crafted volcano which drew excited students to the colorful exhibit displayed in Mrs. Kinz's Science lab.

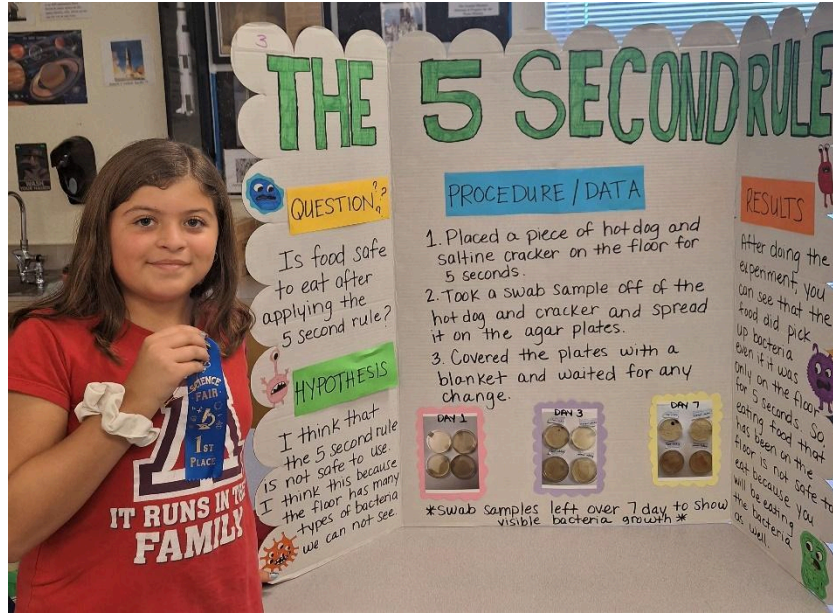
Students worked on their projects at home and/or at Mountain View on weekly Data Days. From here their projects will advance to the STEAM Night District competition to be held in April (location yet to be determined).

"I thought the water density experiment was really interesting," said enthusiastic third-grader, Victoria Soto. "I never knew water did that."

"The important thing, as Einstein said, is to never stop questioning," said Mrs. Kinz. "These students set a goal, committed to it, and achieved results. Now they have something of which they can be truly proud."

Congratulations, science-minded Mountain Lions!

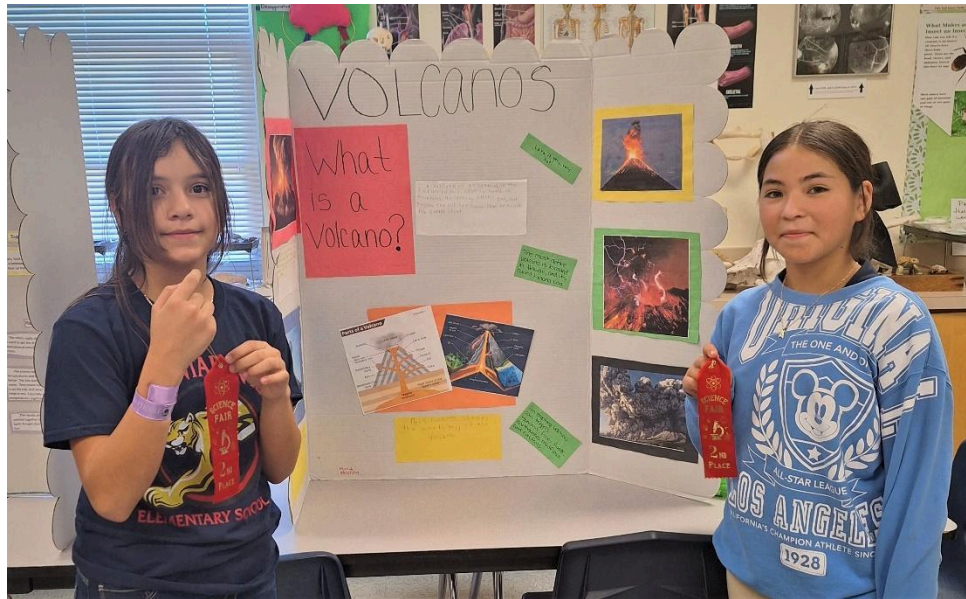
Never stop questioning.



Mountain View fifth-grader, Cataleah Briones, poses with her winning Science project titled, “The 5 Second Rule.”



Fifth-graders, Britany Munoz (left) and Grace Young hold their Second Place Science Fair ribbons. The girls collaborated on a project involving water density.



Science-minded fifth-graders, Mariah Lerma and Aleshka Davis show off their Red Ribbons. Their project, "What is a Volcano?" covered the formation and behavior of volcanoes.



Curious students visit Mountain View's annual Science Fair exhibits.