

Science, up close

Classroom moves out-of-doors for a day

By Casey Hane
staff writer

AFTER DONNING layers of cold-weather clothing, 50 fifth graders from Forest Elementary were ready for a special, out-of-doors day.

Cross country skiing, animal scent tracking, survival skills and nature photography were all learned on a foggy, mid-February day.

They learned their skills in one day — and in many special ways — despite wet air and warmer temperatures, which made for sticky snow.

The Farmington Public Schools group visited the Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center as part of the district's science program, experienced by all fifth graders annually.

Forest students usually visit the center in the winter, and use the wooded area around the elementary for spring and all seasons.

THE DAYLONG sessions usually involve parents, teachers and administrators, who help stu-

dents experience the outdoors in special ways.

"It's a good opportunity to learn one-on-one with the students," said Walter Jablonski, principal at Forest. It allows the students to see him, plus teachers and parents, from another viewpoint. "And I can get to know them as individuals."

The February mini seminar sessions included a segment indoors, then teachers took students outside to practice techniques learned.

In Doug Cooper's survival session, one student said, "you go to a place and just stay there — tell yourself everything will be OK."

Cooper, the district's science coordinator, talked with the group about overcoming fear when one gets lost in outdoors.

"I SUGGEST you build a fire, even if it's warm," Cooper said. "Have a definite routine."

He suggested carrying waterproofed matches dipped in paraffin, a Swiss army knife, a compass and a map, and other key items.

Students in the scent-tracking class learned not only about paw-print tracks, but about other types,

such as bird wingprints in the snow, shed snake skins, and marks left on tree bark from black bears and deer scraping their antlers.

They also learned about animal lifestyles. With the help of teacher Sue Patee, they heard about "unmistakable" bear tracks and heart-shaped tracks of the deer.

But the most fun for Patee's students was developing skills out doors.

WHILE ONE team member acted as a deer, spreading scent of onion juice, vanilla or perfumed water on the snow, the others were wolves. They had to find the hidden deer by following the scent.

In the meantime, novice cross country skiers were learning the basics of putting on skis and outdoor techniques. Many spent more time on the ground than skiing, and budding nature photographers didn't miss any of the action.

After a morning in the classroom and the snow, the group served itself a lunch of pizza, salad, milk and chocolate pudding — then worked on cleanup detail.



staff photos by RANDY DORST

Yogesh Sabnis zeros in on a subject during the outdoor photography class. Before going outside, the students were given instructions in handling the camera and basic composition.



Teacher Gary Sine (left) helps Anu Agrawal and Randa Zia choose their skis.



Heather Sameon enjoys a lunch of pizza, salad and pudding after a morning outdoors. The students helped serve the lunch and clean the cafeteria.



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— Walter Jablonski,
Forest principal

Jenny Kahn (standing) helps her classmate Marly Brown look for signs of animals in the snow.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police and fire calls received during the past week:

REWARD POSTED

A reward of up to \$2,000 is offered for information leading to the arrest or conviction of whoever torched the Ellis Brothers Big Boy restaurant at 23401 Ilatad, just north of Grand River, Feb. 17.

Tips may be given anonymously by calling the Michigan Arson Committee's arson control reward program hotline collect at 1-517-322-0459 or by calling Farmington Hills Police Detective Darnel Krause at 474-6181, ext. 315.

Police and fire investigators are seeking information about activity in the area from midnight to 2 a.m. Feb. 17.

"Anyone who was traveling through that area or residing in the area may have information helpful to investigators. Vehicles seen in the area or suspicious activity or circumstances will all be important information to the detectives and fire investigators," said Lt. Peter Baldwin of the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

Police said they found fresh footprints and tire tracks in the snow behind the restaurant shortly after the 2 a.m. blaze.

Lack of any ignition source in the dining area — where the damage was heaviest — was a chief factor in ruling the fire arson. Fire damage was minimal in the kitchen area. Investigation revealed signs of an accelerant in that area, Krause said.

The fire was reported by a passerby shortly after 2 a.m. When firefighters arrived three minutes later, the dining area was in flames. Within 10 minutes, the roof collapsed. It took 90 minutes to bring the fire under control. The fire probably started about 10 minutes before it was reported, Baldwin said.

THEFTS REPORTED

Several thefts were reported to local police agencies. Some of them follow:

Door locks, refrigerators, ranges, range hoods, dishwashers and lumber valued at \$4,400 were reported stolen from seven units in Building 23 of the Country Ridge Condos, 30811 Crestforest, Feb. 18-25.

A 1986 Chevrolet Camaro Z-28 valued at \$16,000 was reported stolen from Lincoln Court at Independence Green Apartments Feb. 24-25. The car was later recovered, damaged, next to a house under construction on 14 Mile

obituaries

WILHELMINA CACIUK

Mrs. Caciuk, 86, of Farmington Hills died Feb. 16.

Born in Tennessee, Mrs. Caciuk was a homemaker.

Survivors include her husband, Dumitru; daughters, Loren Estes, Barbara Rhyme and Jenny Nascimben; six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Services were Feb. 22 with the Rev. Wesley Husted of Redford Baptist Church officiating. Burial was in Parkview Cemetery, Livonia.

TIMOTHY R. MEADOWS

Mr. Meadows, 40, of Farmington died Feb. 20 in Oak Hill Nursing Home, Farmington.

Mr. Meadows was a truck driver. He was a veteran of Peace Time Service in the U.S. Army.

Survivors include his wife, Geraldine; mother, Ada Campbell; brothers, Albert, James and Neil; sisters, Barbara Stornach and Nancy Long.

Services were Feb. 23 at the Ross B. Northrup & Son Funeral Home with the Rev. Willard Nance officiating. Burial was in Mount Hope Cemetery, Livonia.

WESTOOTE E. (PETE) PETERSON

Mr. Peterson, 62, of Farmington died Feb. 24.

Born in New York, Mr. Peterson was a city engineer with the City of South-

field. He retired in 1984. He served in the Army during World War II in Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe.

Survivors include his wife, Eleanor; son, Gary; daughters, Kathleen Grand and Carol; sister, Marjane Willhite; two grandchildren.

Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church. Memorials may be made to Adrian Dominican Sisters, Maria Health Care Center.

Arrangements were made by the Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington.

JAMES F. WHITTEMORE

Mr. Whittemore, 70, of Walled Lake died Feb. 22 in Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital.

Born in North Carolina, Mr. Whittemore was a retired press operator with General Motors Corp.

Survivors include his wife, Bonnie Lee; sons, James Schuller, Jerry and Johnnie; daughters, Linda Lee Sirls; one brother and four sisters; 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Services were Feb. 24 at the Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. H.J. Haar officiating. Burial was in Baradville, N.C.

ALFRED E. HILLIARD

Mr. Hilliard, 93, of Farmington died Feb. 23 in Oak Hill Nursing Home, Farmington.

Survivors include his daughter Dorothy Breisch; three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Services were Feb. 26 at the Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Harry Geissinger officiating. Burial was in Oakland Hills Cemetery, Novi.

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military news

Tapping the military news pipeline: Second Lt. Sandra Yackley of Farmington has completed the Air Force military indoctrination for medical service officers at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.

Pvt. Gregory Ruhl of Farmington Hills graduated from the U.S. Army Airborne training at Fort Benning, Ga.

He is a TOW Missile specialist and expects to be stationed in Italy.

Pvt. Gregory Ruhl of Farmington Hills has completed one station unit training at the Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga. He is a TOW Missile specialist and expects to be stationed in Italy.