

# Fun masks messiness of class project

By Chris Rizk  
staff writer

**R**ETTA LONDON conducts the same project every year with her students. This year, however, her

kids got the chance to do something that most students only dream of doing. They kind of plastered their principal.

"I had never had that done before," said David Coffin, Wooddale

Elementary principal, still somewhat beleaguered by the plaster of Paris episode.

"At first, I was a little apprehensive about how it might stick to my hair or my mustache, but it definitely didn't hurt."

London invited a hesitant Coffin to participate in her annual all-day mask-making project Oct. 14.

In teams of three — one sculptor, a model and an assistant who cut bandages — London's third graders wrapped each other, Coffin included,

in plaster bandages to create life-cast masks.

"It was really great," London said. "I do this every year with the kids and they love it. This year was special because Mr. Coffin agreed to do it."

FOR MORE than 45 minutes, London said, her 26 third graders "slapped and spilled" plaster on Coffin. He obliged them by remaining perfectly still.

"They just don't realize that you're inside there while their wrapping you," Coffin said.

As a result, the kids behaved as if he wasn't there. "Like you're not really living," explained Coffin. One student contemplated what to do with his mustache while she whispered her concerns to her classmate, Coffin said.

"IT'S REALLY fun to watch the (students) sitting there, looking like mummies," London said. "Can you imagine 26 students having to be silent for 30 minutes while the plaster dries?"

"I think I've established a precedent here," Coffin concluded about his first-ever appearance as a model. London agreed.

"I'll have to have other celebrities drop by next year. The kids really enjoyed doing this with their principal."

Plaster molds were made then carefully removed from faces and allowed to dry. Students painted the masks in the afternoon. Later, London applied a sealing compound that gave them a porcelain-like appearance.



Linda Levitin (left) and Phyllis Moss, who have children in Retta London's Wooddale Elementary class, help Josh Farthing, 8, with his mask. Aram Garbooshian, 6, has his back to the camera.



Wooddale Elementary third-grade teacher Retta London (left) helps Mike Shapiro, 7, make his mask.



Wooddale Elementary principal David Coffin lets Meg Wolff of paste to his face to form a mask. Both are 8. (center) and Erin Kaplan, students of Retta London, apply strips

Staff photos by Randy Borst

## police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police, fire and court cases filed during the past week.

**HOUSE FIRE**  
Two brothers suffered smoke inhalation from a bedroom fire but safely fled their burning house on Ontago in Farmington Hills Oct. 19. A 22-year-old man was in the living room of the one-story house when the smoke detector in the bedroom area blared at 11:40 p.m. That alerted him to a fire in the bedroom where his 16-year-old brother was asleep. The 22-year-old brother was his younger brother and the two left the house. They were treated outside for smoke inhalation.  
The fire, apparently caused by an electrical short in a bedroom appliance, was confined to the bedroom. There was smoke damage throughout the house. Property damage was estimated at \$5,000, said Deputy Chief Peter Baldwin of the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

**ARMED ROBBERY**  
An employee was robbed at knife-point in the parking lot at Pier 1 Imports, 31130 Orchard Lake Road, Oct. 16. But the robber's take was an empty bank bag.  
According to a Farmington Hills police report:  
As the woman got out of her car at 10:50 a.m., a car pulled behind her and a man thought to be in his 20s got out. He flashed a knife with a three-inch blade and demanded money. After she handed over an empty bank bag, he left in a waiting car. The bag was found on nearby Mulfordton.

**LARCENY TRY**  
A 17-year-old West Bloomfield girl recovered her car keys by stepping on the foot of the man who had grabbed them from her in Farmington Hills.  
According to a Farmington Hills police report:  
As the girl unlocked her car, a man thought to be in his 30s grabbed the keys and motioned for her to come and get them. When she stomped on his foot, he bent over and she grabbed the keys back.  
As she started the car, the man banged on the driver's window, demanding to be let in.

**CHILDREN APPROACHED**  
Two incidents were reported in the past week where juveniles were approached by men in cars.  
According to Farmington Department of Public Safety reports:

An 11-year-old was riding her bicycle near the Kroger supermarket, 37025 Grand River, shortly before 7 p.m. Oct. 16, when a man stopped her to ask directions. When she rode away, he continued to shout at her.  
At 4 p.m. Oct. 13, a 4-year-old girl was approached by a middle-aged man in a black car as she walked near her house on Lilac. The driver said to the child, "Come here . . . I won't hurt you." The child ran home and reported the incident to her mother.

**CAR FIRE**  
Damage was estimated at \$500 when a car owned by a West Bloomfield Township resident caught fire as he was driving near Orchard Lake Road and Shilawasee.  
According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, wiring lying across the engine caused the fire. The owner had recently had his engine overhauled. The fire occurred Oct. 19, just after 11 a.m.

**TICKETS ISSUED**  
A 21-year-old Farmington Hills man was ticketed for burning roof boards in his yard on Whitlock, in violation of the city's open burning ordinance, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

**THEFTS REPORTED**  
A propane grill valued at \$335 was reported stolen from a patio at Greenhill Apartments Oct. 11-17.  
Tools valued at \$900 were reported stolen from a house on the 24000 block of Orchard Lake Road Oct. 12-17.

A circular saw valued at \$80 was reported stolen from a house on Frederick near Slocum Oct. 13-16.  
An in-dash radio valued at \$150 was reported stolen from a car parked on Sunnydale Oct. 14-15.  
Tools of undetermined value were reported stolen from Orchard Lake Collision, 20785 Orchard Lake, Oct. 15-16. They were recovered nearby.  
A 1987 Plymouth Cervelle valued at \$13,000 was reported stolen from Strawberry Apartments Oct. 16. It was recovered in Detroit.  
An in-dash radio valued at \$800 was reported stolen from a car parked at Tally Hall, 31005 Orchard Lake, Oct. 16.  
Golf equipment, a tire, an in-dash radio, cassette tapes and a rain coat valued at \$870 were reported stolen from a car parked on Westmoreland Oct. 16-17.  
A snow blower, a vacuum cleaner, oil and beer valued at \$300 were reported stolen from a garage on Westmoreland Oct. 16-17.

Window framing valued at \$4,800 was reported stolen from an addition at Guaranty Federal Savings, 31550 Northwestern Highway, Oct. 16-19.  
A VCR and a color TV valued at \$600 were reported stolen from a house on Ontago Oct. 17.  
Money and jewelry valued at \$370 were reported stolen from a house on Wicklow Oct. 17.  
An in-dash radio valued at \$2,000 was reported stolen from a car parked at Woodhuse Apartments Oct. 17-18.  
Tools valued at more than \$1,300 were reported stolen from three houses on Westmoreland Oct. 17-18.  
About \$150 was reported stolen from a money changer at Cadillac Insurance Co., 31155 Northwestern Highway, Oct. 17-19.

A radar detector, a color TV and sunglasses valued at \$765 were reported stolen from a car parked at Hunters Ridge Apartments Oct. 18-19.  
A wheelchair valued at \$1,500 was reported stolen from the front porch of a house on Nine Mile near Inkster Oct. 18-19.

Jewelry valued at \$4,620 was reported missing from Continental Diamond, 22018 Farmington, Oct. 19.  
A cash box valued at \$175 was reported stolen from Betty's Hallmark, 22930 Middlebelt, Oct. 19.  
A 1986 GMC Jimmy valued at \$11,000 was reported stolen from Vladimirs, 28125 Grand River, Oct. 19.  
A cellular telephone valued at \$1,050 was reported stolen from a car parked at an office building at 31313 Northwestern Highway Oct. 19.

**DAMAGE REPORTED**  
Damage was estimated at \$500 during the attempted theft of a 1986 Ford van parked on Crestview Court Oct. 15-16.  
Damage was estimated at \$100 when a tire of a car parked on Walnut Lane was slashed Oct. 15-16.  
Damage was estimated at \$50 when a rock fell from a semi truck and struck a car westbound on Eight Mile, near Farmington Road, Oct. 16.  
Damage was estimated at \$50 during the attempted theft of a 1986 GMC Jimmy from Gateway Apartments Oct. 16-17.  
Damage was estimated at \$500 when the convertible top of a car parked at Putt 'n Games, 30749 Grand River, was slashed Oct. 17.  
Damage was estimated at \$150 when rocks thrown from a passing car struck the rear door of a car northbound on Orchard Lake Road near 11 Mile Oct. 17.



QUEEN ANNE'S LACE SLEEP COLLECTION

October 24  
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Livonia  
Birmingham  
Presenting our delicate prints, sweet romantics, finely detailed solids of woven or warm flannel fabrics. Sleep gowns, pajamas, robes, Ballet and long lengths.

**Jacobson's**

Shop until 9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday  
Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday