

Pupils talk weather with TV meteorologist

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

ONE OF JOYCE Heenan's students liked TV 2 weatherman Chris Edwards' tie. Another asked if he has someone to put on his television makeup.

Despite the glamor of having a television celebrity in their Beechview Elementary School classroom, the fifth grade students were at ease talking weather with one of the two Detroit television market's honest-to-goodness meteorologists recently.

"Do you have a name for that? A tornado maker?" Edwards asked Jessie King as he showed two, liter pop bottles stuck together and filled with water. When shaken up, an effect — similar to a tornado — results with the water.

Teacher Joyce Heenan's class — which has been studying disasters — are among more than 100,000 students in southeast Michigan who are participating in the Weather-school program Feb. 4-March 1.

In its third year, Weather-school combines classroom meteorological education with television forecasting.

And Heenan's students were interested in both. The questions ranged from can two bolts of lightning strike each other to whether Edwards, a Farmington Hills resident, is nervous when he goes on television to give the weather forecast.

THE LESSON began with Edwards using a computer to show students the kinds of things he looks at and works with as he prepares the day's forecast.

"This is something like what radar shows," Edwards said, pointing to the picture on the computer screen. "It shows the precipitation is moving through our area."

But, Edwards told the students, you don't have to be a meteorologist to figure out what the weather is or will be. Observation is a key element for their forecasting.

"It's one of the best things about weather. You don't need any tools — just go outside and look," said Edwards, who joined TV 2 in November 1989 after a three-year stint in Milwaukee.

With the help of a slide show, Edwards questioned the students on cloud types and showed photos of

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— Chris Edwards
TV 2 weatherman

wild lightning and tornadoes. And he talked about favorite weather myths.

"Lightning definitely strikes the same place twice," said Edwards, whose career began in 1979 as a weather forecaster, specialist at Peterson Air Force base in Colorado Springs. "Lightning is kind of lazy."

The students got a good look at how weather can be different in basically the same area. "Weather is not just right here," Edwards said. "It can be raining on one side of town and clear on another."

There was no doubt the students knew their clouds and what the types of weather certain clouds can mean. "I see a boot," said a student as a photo of a strange-shaped cloud appeared on the screen.

"In a few seconds that can turn into something like this," Edwards said, as a photo of a whirling tornado appeared.

TO STUDENTS' ooohs and aahs, Edwards showed a photo of a 200 mph tornado taken with a telephoto lens. And then talk turned to rainbows, especially two of them at the same time.

"They were coming out of the lake instead of popping out of nowhere," said Judean Martin.

But her interest in rainbows turned quickly to how Edwards does his job on television. "The first time you were on TV, weren't you nervous, very nervous?"

Edwards admitted that indeed, he was nervous. But being on TV is like riding a bike. You get used to it.

As a special treat, Edwards let the students in on some TV weather secrets. "The news people (anchors), boys and girls, read the news. I have a secret for you. We (weathermen) don't read the weather."

And the maps — the handy tools of the TV weather forecast — also



Beechview fifth grader Jessie King shows WJBK-TV weatherman and meteorologist Chris Edwards how easy it is to simulate a raging tornado with the help of liter pop bottles.

are a big secret. It may appear Edwards is standing in front of and pointing to the weather maps on TV. But that's not the way it is.

WHEN EDWARDS is pointing to a map, the map really isn't behind him. It's on a television camera. And he's pointing at the map while looking into the camera. "Watch my eyes. I try not to let people know this is our weather magic. But if we're doing it right, most people can't tell how we're doing it," Edwards said.

Edwards also admitted he's got a gadget like a garage door opener in his hand that can change the maps in the television cameras. And he admitted that he knows where to stand because he doesn't move out of white lines drawn on the studio floor.

Do you really get a makeup



person?" Jessie King asked. Giving away yet another televi-

sion secret Edwards replied, "No I have to wear makeup. But we don't

get a makeup person. We have to do it ourselves.

With the help of a computer, weatherman Chris Edwards shows Joyce Heenan's fifth grade class at Beechview Elementary in Farmington Hills, the kinds of things he looks at while preparing for the weather show. "This shows something like what radar looks like," Edwards told the class.

Gasser takes Manore's place on C'ville board

By Marie Cheasley
staff writer

Gary Gasser, a former member of the Clarenceville Board of Education, has been appointed to fill the seat vacated by Michael Manore on Feb. 1.

The board Thursday appointed Gasser to fill Manore's seat until the June school election.

Gasser, 43, of Angling Street, Livonia, said Friday he has not yet decided whether to seek election in June.

"It will be difficult to decide whether to be a candidate in June,"

said Gasser, an engineering technician for the GM Technical Center in Warren. "I told the board I want time to think about it."

BECAUSE OF illness, Manore, 48, resigned from the board effective Feb. 1.

In accepting his resignation, the trustees praised Manore for his selflessness, ability, intelligence and outstanding work for the board.

Manore, an 11-year veteran of the board and executive director of development services for the city of Taylor, recently was released from Botsford Hospital, where he was un-

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dergoing chemotherapy for leukemia.

Manore, who lives on Gillman Street in Livonia, is on an open-ended medical leave from his job in Taylor.

"We're making whatever accommodations that have to be made for

tween him and his doctor. We're in a holding pattern for him."

THE TRUSTEES Thursday also appointed trustee Linda Brandemuhl to fill Manore's position as board treasurer.

Gasser first came to the board in 1988, when he was appointed to fill the term of Barry Sherman, Livonia police officer who resigned after moving out of the district.

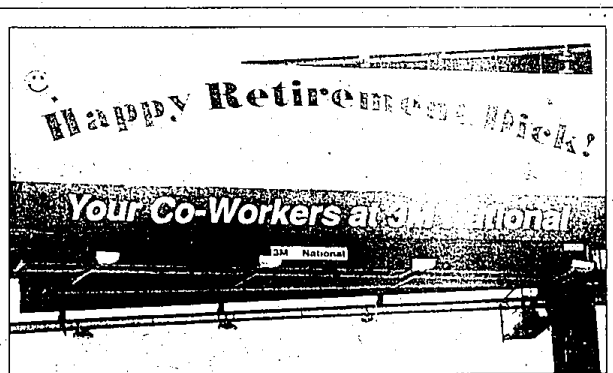
He served for 11 months before losing his seat in the June 1989 election to Clarenceville graduate Dale

Weighill, now a student at University of Michigan.

Gasser presently serves on the district's Public Act 25 committee, set up to find ways to improve the district's schools.

His wife, Charlene, is a paraprofessional at Botsford Elementary. Two of his children, twins Dan and Carlos, attend Clarenceville Middle School.

"I'm a friend of Mike and I talked to him before making the decision to fill his seat," Gasser said. "He supported and encouraged me."



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Giant salutation

Co-workers of Farmington Hills resident Dick Weglarz (in photo at right) are wishing him well in a big way this month. National Advertising Co., a division of 3M, put up a billboard (above) on northbound I-275 near the Oasis Golf Center in Livonia to honor Weglarz, who retired Feb. 1 after 34 years of selling outdoor advertising space for the company. Co-workers signed the 14-by-48-foot illuminated billboard as it was being painted at the company's Westland studio; it will be up throughout the month of February. Weglarz, a Hills resident since 1966, said he is "enjoying the fruits of his labor."



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