



Stem gaze: Above, Darlene Sherry has been coaching *Odyssey of the Mind* for five years with her husband Kevin. Below, the Larkshire team, including Samantha Sherry (left) and Chelsea Keesling, plays cave people.



Looking ahead: Time-traveling students (left, front) Sara Kirsten and Jennifer Musick, and (back left) Samantha Sherry, Chelsea Keesling, Brendan Sherry and Bryan Theisen take part in an OM project.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Odysey of the Mind participants need little parental guidance, only their imaginations.

Members of Larkshire Elementary's first-place entry in the regional competition at Waterford Mott High Feb. 25 put their creative mettle on display at a school assembly Tuesday.

Superintendent Bob Maxwell and Farmington School Board members Dave York and Susan Lightner attended, along with city officials.

Students tackled the problem: Time Traveler, which called for them to make up a skit on time travel with a time machine. The machine had to move or create an illusion of movement.

Past and future had to be included in the journey. They also had to let the audience know when the travelers reached their destination.

And there had to be a surprise ending. No problem, said the Larkshire crew.

Their skit featured two scientists whose sister was dying

of cancer. First, the time machine accidentally went into the past. There, they ran into two cave women who gave them a hocus-pocus medicine.

Then they went to the Mayo Clinic of the future and found a special drug and brought it back to the present.

However, the Mayo medicine didn't work. The cure from the past did.

"That was the surprise ending," said coach Darlene Sherry, whose two children Samantha and Brendan were on the team. Sara Kirsten, Jen-

nifer Musick, Chelsea Keesling, and Bryan Theisen were also on the first-place side.

Darlene Sherry organized the assembly to get more people involved in *Odyssey of the Mind*.

"I'm an avid believer in the program," said Darlene, whose husband, Kevin, also coaches.

"Kids are amazingly creative. They're not stifled by society yet. *Odyssey of the Mind* allows them to open up and do anything they want and use all the creativity within themselves. . . . They can do amazing things."



Family applause as teen nets Red Cross' top honor

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Some 15-20 relatives gathered at the Farmington Hills Activities Center March 3 to applaud Dan Bledsoe, who earned a certificate of merit from the American Red Cross.

On Aug. 17, 1993, Bledsoe, a Milford resident, then 13, performed a "reach-and-rescue" to bring his cousin Gregory Lipple, then 2, to safety.

Bledsoe's certificate bears the name of President Bill Clinton and represents the Red Cross' highest award.

"You have to realize what you need to do ahead of time, by taking the training that you need," said Bledsoe, who attends St. Mary's Preparatory School in Orchard Lake.

"You can't think about it. You just have to do it. You have to make sure that you don't panic and the person you're helping doesn't panic. I knew that he was in trouble, and it was automatic that I knew what I had to do to take care of him."

Bledsoe took a Red Cross Advanced Beginner aquatic course one year earlier at Camp Santa Maria, which taught him the necessary skills.

The American Red Cross pre-

sented the award in a televised spot filmed before a lifeguard training registration.

Marge and Martin Bledsoe; Gregory's mother, Cathy Lipple; and the Rev. and Mrs. Colin Keyes were 200 feet away, chatting on a late afternoon Aug. 17, 1993, unaware of any problems.

Dan was in a 14-foot aluminum boat off LaSalle Island in the Upper Peninsula when he spotted his cousin, Gregory.

"You're all right. I'm coming. Just hold on," Dan's mother, Marge, heard her son say.

Nobody knew he was on the dock. He was dangling from a post, up to his waist in six feet of water.

Gregory's yell alerted the adults, who ran toward the dock. In the meantime, Dan had already pointed the boat toward shore and jumped from the boat to pull Gregory from the water.

"The thing is, we don't know how long he had been there or how long he was holding on," Margo said. "If it wasn't for Dan, I don't know what type of ending this would have had."

He never lost consciousness, but had the potential for drowning, Margo said.

Dan was in the right place in the right time," she said.

Terry Sever, Farmington Hills mayor pro tem, presented a certificate of appreciation from Farmington Hills. Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer was also present.

"There's so much selfishness in the world," Sever said. "I think that it comes from your own family background and influence, that when someone was in distress, you took the action without worrying about endangering yourself."

Dan's father, Martin, is a Farmington Hills police lieutenant. Dan also has a sister, Karen, 11.

Dan Bledsoe hopes to be accepted into a military academy and become a pilot for the Air Force. He is a member of the Civil Air Patrol.

His friends Nick Temples of Milford and Jason Cameron of Novi were there to cheer Dan on. "I can't believe it," Temples said of the hoopla.

Gregory has two brothers, Jeffrey and Curtis. Gregory Lipple, a Troy resident, remembers little about the day he was rescued.

Has he learned to swim?

"I know how to ice skate," Gregory, 4, said.

3rd section of 12 Mile on road to widening

Widening of the section of 12 Mile Road between Halsted and Drake roads is about to begin. It will be completed by December, according to Farmington Hills' Assistant City Manager Dave Call.

This is the third section of 12 Mile Road to be widened. The work done will be consistent with the construction between Drake and Farmington and between Halsted and Haggerty.

The new road will consist of a four-lane boulevard with landscaping in the median and an 8-foot wide safety path along the

north side with pedestrian lighting and park benches.

The city has obtained the funding through federal and state grants for most of the project. The additional costs are being paid out of the city's road funds.

Twelve Mile Road falls under the jurisdiction of the Oakland County Road Commission. However, work on this section was not included in the county's 10-year plan.

"With all of the business and residential development that has already taken place in Farming-

ton Hills, we do not feel we could wait any longer to make those improvements," Call said. "We plan to have the road open to traffic throughout the project."

Construction will begin with the eastbound lanes, leaving existing lanes in place for local traffic. When eastbound lanes have been built, traffic will be moved to the new lanes, the old pavement will be removed and the westbound lanes will be constructed. The safety path, landscaping and pedestrian lighting will be built at the end of the project.

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