

# Students travel, learn via 'Electronic Field Trip'

## CABLE CONNECTION



MARY LINDA CALDERONE

Remember how excited you were to go on school field trips? Mom would sign a permission slip to ride the bus and pack a bag lunch. Well, my conversation with Peggy Schmidt, media director for Farmington Public Schools, brought a completely different meaning to the word "field trip." Do you think our children are just going to the zoo and museum these days?

room may speak with instructors via telephone. They take as many calls as they can fit into the hour. The rest are answered within a couple of days by the use of E-mail on America Online.

To help the teacher plan the unit, CNN provides instructional activities, student handouts, background reading, computer data disks with primary and secondary resources, maps, charts and more. Curriculum related segments on CNN Newsum that complement the upcoming event are also available. Imagine having CNN's news archives at the instructor's disposal as well. My, what an age we live in.

On Feb. 8th and 9th, instructor Vicki Shaw and fourth grade Gili Elementary students as well as instructors Ray Naglik, Kristi Krupa, and the Global Village class at East Middle School celebrated the UN's 50th Anniversary. Students toured the UN building, attended a General Assembly session, met with the U.S. Ambassador to discuss Security Council issues and spent the day with ambassadors from New Zealand, St. Lucia and Sweden.

A "trip" to the Costa Rican Tropical Rain Forest is coming up on April 16 and 17. Students will be walking through the jungle with a biologist as they learn firsthand about this natural habitat, the unique species of mammals, reptiles, insects and birds that live there and the significance of each species to the ecosystem.

Electronic field trips have been part of the Farmington Public School system since last year. Once again, our school system has established itself at the forefront of using new technology to bring to our students real-time, real-life, real-learning experiences via cable and satellite. Do you think they'd notice if I snuck into the classroom and sat in the back?

The next SWOCC meeting will be held March 19 at 4 p.m. in Farmington City Hall. The next CAC meeting will be held March 12 at 7 p.m. in the SWOCC office.

Mary Linda Calderone is the Community Outreach Coordinator for the Southwestern Oakland Commission.

Would you be surprised if I told you certain classrooms in the Farmington Public School system visited the United Nations in New York and will be visiting a Costa Rican Tropical Rain Forest? And they don't even have to leave the school building. It's called the "Electronic Field Trip"

brought to us by Turner Adventure Learning (a division of Turner Educational Services) via Time Warner Cable and Satellite. Understand the beauty of this. We're not talking about kids in a classroom watching a passive documentary. Students actually become part of the lesson. They are able to interact with scientists, researchers, historians and other expert guides — while watching them work "live" in the field. During the field trip (which is cable cast one hour per day for two consecutive days) kids in the class-

## FHS stages concert

Music of John Phillips Sousa will be featured at the "Late Winter/Early Spring" concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 29, in the auditorium of Farmington High School on Shilwanee west of Orchard Lake Road.

More than 70 musicians from the school's concert, symphony and jazz band will perform. Tickets at \$2 per person and \$5 for a family can be purchased at the door.

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