

Back in time

Eagle students bring America's colonial era back to life

Crafts Day at Eagle, in the Farmington school district.

For the program, all students came down to the classrooms of fifth grade teachers Colleen Kowalske and Sarah Hensien to view the dioramas and listen to the colonial kids describe their occupations.

"If I could just experience living back then just for a little while and come back, then yes, it wouldn't be bad," said student Danielle Woerdeman, who portrayed a silversmith. "But not for my whole life. It would be hard, but interesting."

According to Jake Shearer, "It would have been way too hard to live back then." Jake played the role of miller, who harvested and ground grains.

Danielle Wright took on the role of a portrait-making timmer. Her diorama was made to look like a log cabin, with glued-on pretzel sticks for logs.

Although Danielle described the project as "pretty cool, because you're learning about history," she wouldn't want to live in colonial times.

"I like the computers and technology now," Danielle said.

Some of the other students and their roles included Stacie Zaidel (cooper), Stefani Silberstein (seller), Jack Kramer (turner), Brandon Brantley (cutler), Brandon Garmo (tinker), Brittany Braude (printer), Dana Smith (glazier) and Dominique Watha (weaver).

"I learned, when I did my project, just how hard it was to live in the old days," Stacie said. "It gives me more of an appreciation for what I have."

Most of the girls wore bonnets, aprons and long dresses. Even social studies teacher Kowalske wore colonial-era garb.



Greetings: Eagle Elementary School teacher Colleen Kowalske greets second graders visiting her class during the recent Colonial Crafts Day. Students picked colonial-era occupations and learned about clothing prevalent during the 1600s and 1700s.

■ 'It would have been way too hard to live back then.'

Jake Shearer

—Student

"I tell them that they are the experts," said Kowalske, about what kind of direction she gave her students in making the dioramas. "They are their trade."

Kowalske and Hensien began the eight-week unit by covering the book "If You Lived in Colonial Times," written by Ann McGovern. The teachers brought in pictures and artifacts to spark an interest. Then students broke off into groups and discussed various occupations.

After students found out their assignments, they began researching. Dioramas — which demonstrate what was learned — were made at home, with the help of parents, Kowalske said.

Those dioramas featured intricate detail. For example, cutler Brandon Brantley took a three-by-five-inch index card, cut out the shape of a saw and wrapped it in aluminum foil. Using scissors, he then notched it.

"The cutler is a person who makes sharp objects ... then sells (those) to the sawyer, so he can cut up the wood, and to the feller, so he can cut down trees," explained Brandon.

About dioramas, student Allyson Rice, who portrayed a floorboard-making sawyer, said: "You need to plan ahead and know what to put in."

The project, which Kowalske

they dabbled in other exercises such as calligraphy, using old-fashioned quill pens.

"Times were difficult," Kowalske said. "They learned that from doing the writing lesson, dipping the pen into the ink. They said, 'Wow, this is hard. We're really lucky we have pencils.'"

Eagle Principal Arnie Rubin spent some time in the two classrooms during the presentations

and was very impressed with the students' efforts.

"The detail is amazing," Rubin said. "This is a great way to help children make history come alive."

Second-grade teacher Debbie Neef, who brought her class to view the dioramas, said: "Any time they can do hands-on, and get that picture in their mind, it gives them a better understanding of what it was like."

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Authentic: Danielle Wright wore her colonial garb.

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Colonial times came back to life recently at Eagle Elementary School as fifth graders briefly stepped into the shoes of cutlers, sawyers, coopers and various other workmen from the 1600s and 1700s.

Youngsters used to the age of technology found out that life was quite different, and more difficult, in the "good old days." It would be fine to visit but not permanently go back in time, they agreed.

They picked their colonial-era "jobs" out of a hat, did research on the Internet, created detailed shoe-box dioramas and then dressed to portray their parts during the Feb. 26 Colonial



Business: Jason Hawkins' project shows the shop of a fletcher, one who attaches feathers to the shaft of an arrow. Classmate Rachel Orloff (in background) waits for students to visit her peraker (wigmaker's) shop.

Snappers wanted: Photos should show best of libraries

Photographers are invited to capture the spirit of the library in the "Beyond Words: Celebrating America's Libraries" Photo Contest sponsored by the Farmington Community Library in celebration of the Bicentennial of the Library of Congress.

Photos should demonstrate the best of what their library has to offer and/or how the library makes a difference in their lives.

The contest is open to photographers of all ages. Winners will be chosen in three divisions: professional, amateur/adult and amateur/youth (ages 6-17). Rules and entry forms are available at the Farmington Community Library, 32737 12 Mile Road and the Farmington Branch, 23500 Liberty Street. Entries will be accepted immediately until March 29. Prizes will be awarded in each division. Winners will be announced during National Library Week, April 11-17.

The top winner in each division will be forwarded for judging in the national "Beyond Words: Celebrating America's Libraries" Photo Contest sponsored by the American Library Association and the Library of Congress.

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for first place, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third as well as five \$150 honorable mentions in each division. A grand prize of \$1,500 will be awarded for the best overall photograph. An American Library Association President's Prize of \$500 and a Library of Congress Prize of \$500 also will be given. Only photographers entered in the local contest are eligible for national judging.

For more information, contact the Adult Reference Desk at 653-0300 (Farmington Hills) or 474-7770 (Farmington).

LIBRARY Books In Demand



Editor's note: Every week the Farmington Community Library will provide the Farmington Observer with a list of books that are most in demand by patrons. For more information, contact the library, 553-0300.

HOT HITS

- The Testament, John Grisham
- Southern Cross, Patricia Cornwell
- Bill Bright, Jonathan Kellerman
- Sudden Change of Heart, Barbara Taylor Bradford
- The Greatest Generation, Tom Brokaw
- Memoirs of a Geisha, Arthur Golden
- River's End, Nora Roberts
- Seed No Flowers, Sandra Brown
- Angel's Flight, Michael Connelly
- Rain, Julie Garwood
- Ashes to Ashes, Tom Hoag
- Amy and Isabelle, Elizabeth Strout
- We'll Meet Again, Mary Higgins Clark
- The Reader, Bernhard Schlink
- The Simple Truth, David Baldacci