

Field day

Kids celebrate the end of their first year

As the school year rolled to a close, the kids at Mary Helen Guest Elementary School in Walled Lake had a ball at their Kindergarten Field Day. The Walled Lake district includes a northwestern portion of Farmington Hills.

The afternoon event brought the school's kindergartners together to celebrate their first year of learning by participating in non-competitive field events.



Balloon breaking: Parent volunteer Kathy Brewer holds a balloon in place while kindergartner Omar Mabrouck sits down to pop it.



Free throw: Guest Elementary School kindergartner Briana Willoughby shoots a basketball during Kindergarten Field Day.

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Assessment Program (MEAP) tests indicate youngsters are lagging in geology, chemistry and physics, or more specifically, in knowledge of the earth, the elements and energy.

The program she aimed for would help them understand how those sciences relate to each other and help determine where and how the children and the animals live and why. It would also teach about careers that utilize those sciences.

It would also help rekindle the girls' interest in the sciences at a time when they traditionally lose that inquisitiveness.

So Obrizak, a teacher and science consultant with the district for 10 years, designed Summer Science Sleuths, a program that would be not only hands-on, "but thinking hands-on," she said.

Drawing out

Its framework would aim at drawing out the children's natural curiosity while also teaching them to think analytically - just as real sleuths do - while learning to work together in teams.

"Regular classes have 45 minutes of hands-on activities most of the time," Obrizak said, "but they don't work in teams for an extended time."

Each day began with a different sound tied to what that class would cover and the kids would try to guess what the sound was. One day it was a rocket blasting off, for example, while another day it was sheep - although the younger kids said "cows" on that one.

Then a guest speaker would show them the tools of his or her trade and the kids would try to guess the career.

One day, a woman showed them a window punch, a gated-Y hose, a Nomex hood, an N bangle, a seatbelt cutter and other items.



Looking: Cameron Masucci, 6, (center) examines the isopods (aka roly pollys) he and his companions Evan Hopper (L) and Alex Trimmer caught.

As she revealed each item, the youngsters and the teachers or volunteers working with them, including parents and high school science students, jotted down clues. Then kids used the clues to determine the job.

When the kids guessed "rescue worker" - one youngster thought it was a job punching out windows all day - the Farmington Hills paramedic and firefighter explained how she used the tools. And the kids also learned the term "paramedic."

But the program had other challenges. For example, some youngsters learned how electricity and circuitry work and built little houses, doing their own wiring. The girls even figured out the physics of hydraulics well enough to get their garage doors to work. And all of them learned what causes fires and how fire marshals use science to solve mystery fires.

The older students - who were interested in oceanography, animals and other living things - became interested in chemistry via a special project.

Learn needs

Asked to figure out how 10 dif-

ferent animals donated to Farmington/Farmington Hills would live, the students had to determine the animals' needs regarding food and shelter. As part of the experience, they tended fresh- and saltwater fish tanks, not only feeding the fish but keeping daily records of such things as temperature, salinity and pH factor to keep the fish alive.

What did the students think of the Summer Science Sleuths? Eric Tremblay enjoyed the fact "the teachers aren't so serious" in the program.

Alex Goldberg was surprised at what he learned. For instance, he found that kelp, which he thought was just "a kind of seaweed," is a food used in gelatin products and cake frosting.

Laura Zazaian was surprised by the size of the spiral-gilled tubeworm she and others examined. "It was really big," she said.

But Goldberg probably summed up the kids' feelings about the Sleuths when he said, "If I had a choice between this and playing around home next summer, I'd come back here."

Fireworks show adds spark to Hills July 4th weekend

The city of Farmington Hills will sponsor a fireworks celebration on Sunday, July 4.

Last year a concert by the musical group, The Teen Angels, and fireworks concluded the city's 25th Anniversary Celebration. The response to that event was so popular that the city council has asked for an "encore."

This year the "Teen Angels" will once again perform all the classics from the 1950s in their distinctive style beginning at 7 p.m. This five-piece group has performed nationally for 25 years and performs locally more than 100 times a year.

Costumed in 1950s style fashion, they take the audience back to the beginnings of pop, rock and do-wop. The three-hour show at the stage in the west end of Founders Sports Park will begin at 7pm and conclude with fireworks at approximately 10 p.m. on Sunday.

Renowned pyrotechnic artist from the Zambelli Company will once again conduct this year's aerial display of sights and sounds.

Limited parking for authorized handicapped stickered vehicles will be allowed in the west parking area at Founders Sports Park immediately adjacent to the baseball fields, a short distance from the concert stage.

All other parking will be provided south of Eight Mile Road at Metroview within walking distance of the concert area. (No parking is allowed on Metroview or at the east side of the park near the arena.)

People should follow the signs along Eight Mile Road and prepare for a night of family fun, entertainment and fireworks. Refreshments will be sold on site at the new park concession stand near the stage. City ordinance prohibits alcoholic beverages at the park and parking areas.

Founder's Sports Park is located on Eight Mile Road, a half-mile east of Halsted and 1/4 mile west of Gill.

For information, call the Department of Special Services at 248-473-9570 weekdays.



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CARRIER OF THE MONTH: FARMINGTON

Lance Dawson, son of Ken and Karen Dawson of Farmington Hills, has been selected as May's Carrier of the Month for the Farmington Observer.

Lance is an A student at East Middle School and enjoys math and science. He has a sister, Natalie and likes running and backpacking. He plans to attend the Air Force Academy and become a pilot.

What Lance likes most about his route, is being able to meet his neighbors and save money for college.



Lance Dawson

If you want to be a Farmington Observer carrier, please call 810-901-4716

Drop-in hockey rolls into arena

The Farmington Hills Ice Arena is offering drop-in roller hockey 5-9 p.m. Monday through Friday. Play with side boards.

No chasing the puck into the grass. Games will be available until July 14 and the cost is \$2 per session. Helmets are required.

For more information call the ice arena at 478-8800 or stop by the arena at 35500 W. Eight Mile Road.