

STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARROLL

Here goes Schyler Boyd (at left) begins his story with a little class participation.

Sharing

Older and younger kids brought together by the joy and fun of reading

This marks another installment of *Today's Lesson*, an occasional series which chronicles classroom activities in Farmington Public Schools.

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Wide-eyed Highmeadow Common Campus pupils sat and listened, and danced, and sang ... and laughed.

This was not your typical storytelling session Wednesday morning at the Farmington district elementary school. A group of Farmington High School students in the advanced speech class of teacher Cori McLaughlin were just as animated in their "readings" of various classic children's books such as "The Crazy Bear That Lives Under the Stairs" or "Amelia Bedelia."

There was senior Nikki Giroux, donning a Green Bay Packers cheesehead hat and talking in a squeaky mouse voice for her rendition of "The Stinky Cheese Man."

Junior Bob Hoyer put on some long ears as a visual aid for "It's Not Easy Being a Bunny."

Most animated of all - appropriately for the story "Where the Wild Things Are" - was senior Nick Ward. He wore a robe, pajamas and a cardboard "crown"



Acting out: Senior Nick Wood and his Highmeadow students dance as part of the "Where the Wild Things Are." The older students shared their love of reading with their young counterparts.

and pranced in circles with his young audience during the story's rumpus scene.

Literary link

Watching from the sideline was Highmeadow first-grade teacher Julie Bennett, who thought the storytelling session would help the younger kids see for themselves that reading is an activity that even older kids enjoy.

"They're getting the enjoyment of hearing stories and getting some role modeling, too," Bennett said. "It's great to see older students enjoy the same literature they enjoy. They're so well prepared and they do a great job."

The idea for a field trip was that of Highmeadow media specialist Julie Riegel, who has worked in a partnership with McLaughlin the past two years to give high school and elementary students a unique chance to spend some time together in a classroom setting.

"It's story telling, not story

reading," Riegel emphasized.

Several classrooms had three or four simultaneous stories being told to clusters of attentive kids. Each high school student in a particular classroom rotated from cluster to cluster, making sure every youngster heard every story.

Both Giroux and Ward said they also got a kick out of putting on costumes and really getting into the books they read.

It's appreciated

"The kids got a ton of enjoyment out of it, you can tell by the looks on their faces," Giroux said. "And it benefits me because

I want to be a teacher. I love little kids."

To Ward, who intends to be a theater major at Miami of Ohio University next year, it is important to jazz up the stories, because the kids already know them by heart.

"Chances are a lot of them read it before," he said. "If I get them up dancing, and I have my pajamas on, they're probably going to get into it a little bit more."

McLaughlin said the reading excursion is "a celebration of literacy. It's neat for these young kids to see these young adults from another school come in and share that literacy."

The experience also is good for the high school students because the reaction from the children substantiates what they are doing.

"More than any other assignment in speech, this is the one they really remember," the teacher added.



In character: First grader Amber Chapell wears a wig to play a part in the story told by Farmington High School 11th grader Layne Bodily.

New format enlisted for scholarships

The Farmington Community Band will initiate a new format for the Barbara Hughes Memorial Scholarship beginning this year.

The scholarship is named after the Farmington Hills resident and former band member, to be used to further education and pursuit of music.

The \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a student from one of the three Farmington district high schools who demonstrates proficiency as an instrumentalist

APPLICATIONS

in woodwind, brass or percussion.

Paul Barber, FCB conductor, announced the award criteria. "The student must have been an active band member for four years, have a consistent track record for contribution to the music program and have demonstrated excellence in musicianship."

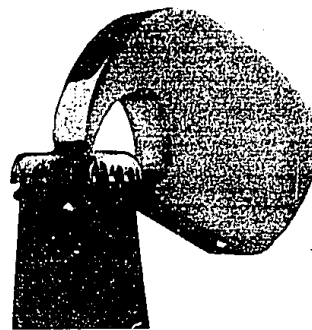
The three high school's music directors will select a student candidate to compete for the \$500 scholarship. The three candidates will submit a written application by May 1 and compete in the FCB Scholarship Audition to be held during the Festival of Arts Week at the Costick Center.

A five-member scholarship panel will determine the award winner based on the written application, solo performance and a personal interview.

While plans for the award ceremony have not been finalized yet, it is hoped the student will be presented with the \$500 award at a future performance of the FCB and at the student's high school awards assembly.

"This is the Community Band's way of encouraging talented music students in the Farmington area to continue their interest in music after they graduate from high school," Barber said.

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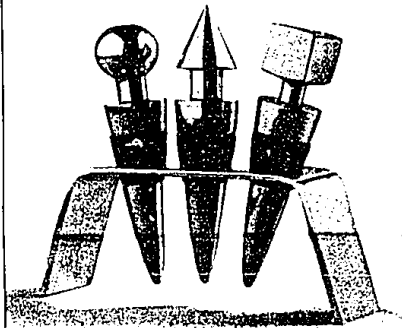
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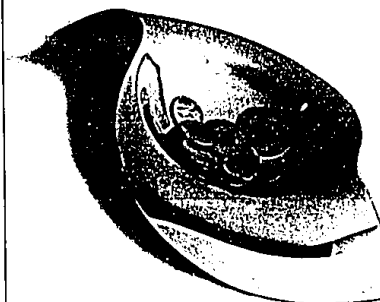
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