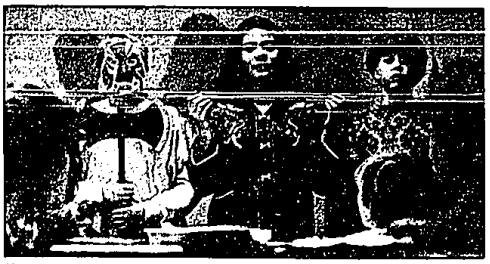
RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Eleven-year-old Andre Bailey of Farmington Hills portrayed the Monkey King during the videotaping of a skit written and performed by Steppingstone Center students. Bailey holds the magic wand, which has just put Chris Lubowicki, 10, of Brighton to sleep.



Upper elementary students at Steppingstone Center in Farmington Hills perform an Asian skit as part of their cultural learning. Pictured are 12-year-old Sean DeRoche of Plymouth, 11-year-old Tami Morse of Plymouth and 12-year-old Eric Uratchko of Northville.

Skits help students learn ways of Asians

By Casey Hans
staff writer

cultural collage

Everything they learned about the Asians showed — in their costuming, self-designed props, mannerisms, and presentation.

"They dare have a party without me . . . those miserable animals!," cried Andre Bailey, an 11-year-old student from Farmington Hills playing the lead role of the Chinese "Monkey King" and clad in purple pantaloons.

Bailey was one of 12 upper elementary students at Steppingstone Education Center in Farmington Hills videotaping skits they had written based on stories from China, Japan and Indonesia. Coordinated by student Jim Steele, the pupils also designed their own props and put together costumes.

Last week's videotaping session was the final project for a social studies class where students had learned about Asian music, food and cultures.

"We really try to integrate things here," explained teacher Mary Baysha.

She used traditional book learning, scheduled field trips to Hindu temples and Asian restaurants. She invited visitors from The Japan School and Detroit's International Institute to give the students a well-rounded view in her teaching segment on World Regions.

From the Asia countries, she said, students will move on to study the Middle East.

BECAUSE THE students have already finished a course in world history, the in-depth study of Asian and other countries is designed to give them an understanding of how the cultures relate to our own. Baysha's background in history and social studies, with a concentration on Asia, also brought insight to the program.

Baysha will have the same group of students for another two years at Steppingstone, when they will learn about Ancient Civilizations and Industrial Development and Government. This year's World Regions class is the first of the three steps.

"It's very stabilizing for the students. There's not that 'get acquainted — try everything out' period," said Steppingstone's associate administrator, Linda Alvarado. "Teachers can keep very close track and can stay with them, developmentally."

Tucked into several rooms at the Mercy Center, 11 Mile and Middlebelt, Steppingstone is a private school serving gifted youngsters from grades one through eight.

The director of the center, Kiyo Morse, was formerly active with the Plymouth-Canton Association for the Academically Talented.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● JUMPS FROM OVERPASS

A 25-year-old Farmington Hills woman was seriously hurt after jumping from the Orchard Lake Road overpass onto I-696 early Thursday.

The woman was listed in stable condition Friday at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills. She suffered a pelvis fracture, leg fractures, two broken ankles and a heel injury, police said.

Police found her lying on the south shoulder of eastbound I-696, underneath the Orchard Lake Road viaduct, at 1:10 a.m. Thursday. She was conscious but in pain.

A man and a woman were eastbound on I-696 when they saw something lying in the right lane just to the right of the center striped lane underneath the viaduct. After he swerved, the two saw it was a person gesturing for help.

By the time they stopped to offer help, the woman had rolled onto the shoulder.

It appeared the woman, who had parked nearby at Oakland Community College, was despondent, police said.

● SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

A man in a car motioned to a 7-year-old girl shortly after she stepped off a school bus at Creekside and Hemlock at 3:45 p.m. Wednesday.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

The girl began walking home when she saw a light-gray car, occupied by a man thought to be in his 20s, stopped near the intersection. As she walked by, he motioned for her to come over to his car. He then rolled down the window and asked her if she wanted a ride.

She continued to walk home and he drove off.

● HELPING HAND

Farmington Hills officers assisted Detroit police in identifying four suspected car-part thieves Thursday night.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

After becoming suspicious of two cars at Grand River and Middlebelt at 11:20 p.m. Thursday, Farmington Hills officers followed them to 10 Mile and Grand River. There, the suspicious cars cruised several parking lots. The cars then headed to a Novi car dealership on Grand River, where the occupants got out and looked inside several other cars.

The two cars then headed east on Grand River to Dexter Chevrolet, at Eight Mile and Burt, in Detroit. Officers watched as four men placed objects in the trunk of a car parked on the street running through the dealership.

When the suspicious cars left, officers determined three dealership cars had been broken into and two in-dash radios had been stolen.

A Farmington Hills officer followed the suspicious cars into Detroit before losing them when they weaved recklessly through traffic near Seven Mile and Southfield.

Detroit police found the suspicious cars on Chalfonte near Wyoming. Four Detroit men, ages 17-24, were arrested as they delivered what police believe were stolen car radios to a 19-year-old woman. The Detroit woman also was arrested.

● THEFTS REPORTED

Jewelry valued at $425 was reported stolen from a house on Valley Bend between Oct. 1 and Nov. 30.

A TV, silverware and dishes valued at $300 were reported stolen from a shed at EZ Mini Storage, 24500 Sinacola Court, between Dec. 5 and Jan. 3.

A 1986 Pontiac Firebird was reported stolen from an apartment on Tulane Jan. 4-5.

obituaries

HELEN H. INCH

Mrs. Inch, 44, of Farmington Hills died Dec. 28 at the University of Ann Arbor Hospital.

Mrs. Inch was a secretary at DuPont.

Survivors include her son, Michael; a daughter, Yvette; parents, Frank and June Adkins.

Services were held at the Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Jerry L. Hall officiating. Burial was in Annie Young Cemetery, Pikeville, Ky.

EMMA L. ANDERSON

Mrs. Anderson, 93, of Farmington Hills died Jan. 3 in Botsford Hospital, Farmington Hills.

Born in Indiana, Mrs. Anderson was a homemaker.

Survivors include her son, John; a daughter, Carol Canavan; sister, Mary Horushaw; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Services were Jan. 5 at the Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Kathryn Thoresen of St. Paul Presbyterian Church officiating. Burial was in Acacia Park Cemetery, Birmingham.

DELLA PHILLIPS BROWN

Mrs. Brown, 42, of Livonia died Dec. 28 in Henry Ford Hospital.

Mrs. Brown was a homemaker.

Survivors include her husband, Ronald; sons, Raymond Jr. and Matthew; mother, Patricia Wurixbacher; five sisters and one brother.

Services were Dec. 30 at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Lester McCabe officiating. Cremation was in Evergreen Crematory, Detroit.

Memorials may be made to the Armenian Relief Fund.

JEAN SALLOW

Mrs. Sallow, 76, of Farmington died Dec. 30 in Sinai Hospital, Detroit.

Mrs. Sallow was a retired office clerk from General Motors.

Survivors include four nieces and four nephews and sister-in-law, Rita Fraser.

Services were Jan. 3 at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. John Maki of Salem United Church of Christ officiating. Burial was in Roseland Park Cemetery, Royal Oak.

Memorials may be made to the Michigan Heart Association.

LUCILLE E. JOHNSON

Mrs. Johnson, 88, of Novi, formerly of Farmington, died Jan. 1 in Novi Care Center.

Born in Illinois, Mrs. Johnson was a homemaker.

Survivors include her sons, James and Donald; daughters, Dorothy Nichols and Katherine Wechorek; half-sister, Edith Carr and stepsister, Marie Logsden; brothers, Carl and Paul Caplinger; eight grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Services were Jan. 6 at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Thomas Sluss of Temple Baptist Church officiating. Burial was in Oakwood Cemetery, Novi.

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