

Highmeadow students attend Space Camp

Fifth graders from Highmeadow Common Campus in the Farmington school district Friday departed for a three-day excursion to the Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala.

Escorting the 48 youngsters on the trip of a lifetime are Highmeadow Principal Beverly Miller and fifth-grade teachers Julie Folkert, Karen Farber and Julia Mills.

The group was expected to return home Monday, April 10.

Students earned money for the trip by participating in various fund-raising activities.

The trip was motivated by teachers' enthusiasm after attending a JASON Project workshop in March. The JASON Project is a nationwide educational resource for educators.

This year's JASON XI theme was "Going to Extremes," examining the spirit of exploration and how history, culture and geography were shaped by the discoveries made by explorers. (Kelley Pitts of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills was one of the student argonauts at JASON XI).

All year, Highmeadow students have been studying explorers from the past and present, including space exploration.

Teachers planned lessons around the JASON theme by integrating history, science, health, language arts, math and technology.

One reason they were able to collaborate in such a manner, according to Miller, was the change in the school's schedule.



Happy campers: In the photos above and below are Highmeadow Common Campus fifth graders from the classes of teachers Karen Farber, Julie Folkert and Julia Mills who recently returned from a three-day excursion to the Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala.

For the rest of this school year, students will come to school three minutes earlier and will lose six minutes of their daily lunch hour, with those minutes earmarked for instruction.

The schedule change was made to accommodate the implementation of three half-day teacher training workshops, where work on integrated lessons can progress.

The school is hopeful that the Space Camp journey will become an annual event, and to that end would like anyone interested in sponsoring students in the future to contact the school, (248) 489-3699.



Observer reporter earns recognition

Farmington Observer staff writer Tim Smith was among education reporters to receive an award during Friday's Tri-County Alliance for Public Education breakfast in Detroit.

Smith received a certificate "for supporting quality public education by keeping the focus on teaching and learning as significant factors in writing about the local, state and national issues influencing our schools."

A 14-year veteran at the Observer and Eccentric



Tim Smith

Newspapers, Smith covers Farmington Public Schools and the city of Farmington for the Farmington Observer, which he joined in July 1997.

Smith also is the author of "Miracle Birth Stories of Very Premature Babies - Little Thumbs Up!"

Among other Observer & Eccentric staff members recognized at the breakfast were Tom Boer, former editor of the Farmington Observer and Plymouth Observer schools reporter Tony Bruscatto.

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