



Walter Jablonski taps tree. (Staff photo by Carl Stoddard)

Forest students tapping maples

By SUSAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON—How sweet it will be when Forest Elementary School students pour maple syrup made from trees around the school onto their pancakes at a PTO-sponsored pancake supper sometime soon.

For the first time in three years, Forest's students are tapping the sugar maple trees in the woods surrounding the school.

"They have turned this into a whole learning thing," said Mary Ann Riley, Forest PTO president. Not only do the students learn about tapping trees, the temperatures needed, the equipment and which weeks the sap runs, they also have a chance to put metric measuring to use.

"The children will be measuring their sap in liters. The sixth graders didn't understand why we had to do it that way, but it wasn't as hard for the younger ones," Mrs. Sally Wilson said.

A COORDINATOR of the school-wide project, Mrs. Wilson said the buckets for sap collection were first measured for their capacity, using a

200 milliliter (ml) beaker and a two-liter can.

It makes measuring a bit awkward, but it helps, she said. Assisting the students is principal Walter Jablonski, who lead the class after class Indian file to the pre-marked trees.

Explaining each step, Jablonski first bored a hole through the bark, inserted a spile for purification and then tapped a "spile" or spout into the tree.

The top of each class's bucket is covered with cheesecloth, which is held on by elastic. Jablonski then instructed the class to tramp over to an uncovered bucket which has been collecting sap for a week. An icy crevice of clear sap rests on the bottom.

"IT'S BEEN a cold week, and the sap hasn't been running well," he explained to the students. "Look, there is even frozen sap in the spile."

A small history lesson played a part in the project as Jablonski told of the discovery of maple syrup.

An Indian, as the story goes, left his hatchet in a tree overnight. He pulled it out to go hunting the next morning, leaving a bucket behind. Learning against the tree, the bucket collected sap which spilled from the cut. When the Indian's squaw discovered the bucket, she thought it was full of water, and boiled it to cook that evening's dinner. The sap thickened into syrup.

After leaving their buckets under the spiles for a week, the students will bring them in and take them to the school's cooks who will boil it down.

Motorist in need sends a thank you

FARMINGTON—Three young teens, all visitors, assisted a motorist with a flat tire this week as patrons were leaving a late movie in Old Orchard Theater.

"We hear so much bad about the kids of today I'd like to record something good," said Chris Karniotis, who was also a movie goer that evening. As he approached his car to leave, the woman in the car next to him had a flat tire. He was unable to help her because of a cardiac condition, and asked for aid from a trio of teenage boys who were passing by.

They said they'd try. The unusual part of this is that they all had some kind of physical disability, he said.

Peter Fiedsen was in a full body cast. Sam Willis had recently wrenched an arm, and Greg Gindici is a paraplegic. "But together they managed to get that tire changed," he said.

"They were driving a car with a Texas license and said they were visiting at 5777 Rhinewood in Farmington. That's all I know about them—it must have to do with the southern hospitality we hear about," Karniotis said.

When the young men were offered money for their time and trouble, they answered "Don't spoil a good thing."



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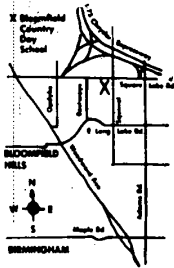
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