

Kids Explore The Deeps

(Continued from Page B10)

Minnnows swam hurriedly downstream as we stood on the bank of the stream. The water was clear enough to see that the bottom was muddy and rocky.

Buttercups were blooming in the meadow near the creek, also. Ellie Camlin took the tried-and-true buttercup-under-the-chin test, and we determined that indeed, she loves butter! Everyone took the buttercup test and we got back onto the cowpath.

The snake that usually suns himself on a hollow log retreated into his safe hideaway before we got to see his colorful-patterned skin. Marching on, we entered a shady, wooded area of the pasture. A few of the smallest kids got to try out the grapevine swing that Rachel loves to sit on each time she takes a walk.

Danny Sullivan said that he liked "climbing on the trees," the best. "We're coming to the jungle gym tree," announced my husband, Chuck.

The children knew just what to do on the huge tree that had been uprooted in a storm years ago but is still growing sideways. After climbing over, under and around the tree, the kids perched themselves on one of the big limbs for a class picture.

Still walking parallel to the meandering stream, we followed the cowpath to more interesting trees. "That looks like Peter Rabbit's doorway," exclaimed Mrs. Donaldson. A pair of trees formed an arched doorway through which the children played follow-the-leader. As saplings, the trees most likely were bent over by the fence or a log and grew in the odd arch-shape that forms a little natural playhouse.

The cowpath led us to the back pasture which brought us to one end of the 150 acres that make up the deeps. The railroad tracks lie just across Little Pipe Creek which serves as a watering hole for our herd of Angus cattle. The cows were grazing in the big meadow just beyond the gate.

"Do you see that cow over there with the black dot around her eye?" I asked the hikers. "Guess what her name is..." You're right — she's Dot!"

The children chuckled and



Ashley Walker, left, said that the favorite part of her visit to the farm was the hike.

headed for the stony outcropping of rocks in the woods beyond.

May apples with their green umbrellas stood in masses. The children walked above them on Mother Nature's balance beams which were really fallen limbs.

Ashley Walkers said that the hike was lots of fun. "I liked the cows, streams, cows tracks, and the birds that were golden."

She was one of the first to reach the big rock and take a look over the edge to see how high up we were.

"We're as high as the treetops," I pointed out, as we looked at New Windsor from our lofty perch.

'G' is for groundhog. Well the Farmer's Alphabet book that the class read back at the Montessori classroom before they visited us didn't really say that. But they did get to see some big holes that a whistlepig had recently excavated. One hole was big enough for little Sara Fan or her friend Samantha

Droque to disappear into.

It was about that time that Samantha came to me and said, "Mrs. Schuster, I'm tired." It had been a long walk - almost an hour.

"Samantha, you're in luck. Your taxi just pulled up," I reassured her. Chuck started the tractor and opened up the gate to the hay wagon that we had left there before the class arrived, to haul them back to the house.

"Yea, a hay ride," they cried with excitement. "I've loved tractors since I was one," said Shiloh Frey as he climbed up onto a bale of hay.

"I liked getting in the wagon," said Ashley Zombro.

"Going on the hay ride was fun," agreed Krista Webb.

"I liked the hayride," said Grace Donaldson.

Unfortunately, Grace's mother, Linda Donaldson could not ride in the wagon because of her allergies. She hopped in the car with me (I had it parked close by) and we raced back to the house to prepare a snack for the weary hikers.

Just as they sang the last refrain of "Old MacDonald Had A Farm," the wagon came to a halt next to the barn and everyone headed for the picnic table next to the pond. They were back where they started. By that time, a light snack of fresh strawberries, cheese, pretzels, crackers, and a special treat called Purple Cow, were on the table. In true Montessori style, students waited until all were served before anyone took a bite. Hilary Barkin said "having snack was the best part. It tasted like ice cream. We're going to try it at home," she added.

Judging by the purple mustache that Laura Augustine sported, Purple Cow was a hit. A simple recipe of milk, grape juice and ice cream — what better way to end a visit to the farm?

Purple Cow

2 cups cold milk
1 6-ounce can unsweetened grape juice concentrate
1 pint vanilla ice cream, softened
Put all of the ingredients in a blender. Mix well, pour into four glasses (preferably clear glasses so you can see the purple color) and enjoy!



Laura Augustine walks through a tunnel formed by two adjacent trees that have grown in an arc shape. A parent, who accompanied the students, said that the unique tree looks like Peter Rabbit's doorway.

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