

Kids Korner

Kids Garden At School

BETH MILLER
Cumberland Co. Correspondent
CARLISLE (Cumberland Co.)
— The courtyard of the Hamilton Elementary School is a lot more colorful, and a lot better for the environment recently.

That is because the students of the school used their green thumbs this past school year.

With help from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, the children in kindergarten through fifth grade created a plant-filled garden in the center courtyard of their school.

Don Showers was one of those kids who got to play in the dirt. "I liked learning about all the different flowers," he said.

He and the other pupils had plenty of different flowers to learn about.

The color garden that was planted by the kindergartners and first graders included flowers like the Black-eyed Susan, Moonbeam and the great blue lobelia.

As with the other students, the main purpose for creating their garden was to teach the children the importance of conservation and how to prepare and plant gardens.

All of the gardens were designed to be low maintenance. They all contain beneficial plants that have uses for people and also attract wildlife.

The second graders raised their own wildlife to put in their garden. They raised three butterflies in the classroom, then released them in their newly-planted garden.

Those butterflies got to enjoy plants like blue false indigo, bee balm, cardinal flower, parsley fennel, and gloriosa daisies.

The third graders studied erosion factors as part of their gardening project. They saw how sandy soil affects ornamental grasses that grow in those kinds of environments.

The perennial ornamental grasses in their garden included yarrow, plume grass, switch grass, hairgrass, blue oat grass and Indian grass.

Creating a fern garden was the big job for the fourth graders who learned by incorporating common woodland plants into their project.

They planted wood ferns, sweet woodruff, ostrich fern, white wood aster, sensitive fern, cinnamon fern, royal fern and creeping phlox.

The oldest kids at the school, the fifth graders got to plant an herb garden. To do that, they studied about how herbs can be used to make medicines and fragrances, and how they can be turned into dyes.

The plants they put in their garden included chamomile, coriander, lavender, Russian sage, marigold, thyme, sweet marjoram, garlic, chervil, and chive.

This was a school project where everybody learned something and everybody had fun at the same time.

Brandon Shipsook said he just enjoyed "being outside with nature."

"We helped the first graders and I really enjoyed helping other people and helping the environment," said Catrine Hall.

Lindsay Hench thought about how these gardens will be enjoyed by people for years to come.

"The gardens will always be here," Lindsay said. "They will always make me feel a part of this school, that I helped plant this."



Hamilton Elementary 5th graders put the finishing touches on their courtyard garden.

Camp Teaches Farm Safety

KAREN BUTLER
Maryland Correspondent
JEFFERSON, Md. — Jane Smith is a woman with a mission. She wants to bring a message to farm youth everywhere about the potential dangers around them, and to help prevent farm accidents. "If we can save just one life, then it's all been worthwhile," said Mrs. Smith, safety chairman for the Frederick County Farm Bureau, referring to the "Safety Camp 4 Just Kids" that she founded.

Now in its fourth year, the camp has delivered information on safety to hundreds of youth aged 8-13 throughout Frederick and surrounding counties. As evidence of the program's popularity, this year the 60 openings filled up quickly and a waiting list had to be formed. The camp is sponsored by Frederick County Farm Bureau, Farm Bureau Women, and many other organizations and individuals. It is held at the Frederick County 4-H Camp Center in Jefferson.

Mrs. Smith saw the need for a safety camp as the result of a heartwrenching series of accidents in her community. A little boy suffocating in a gravity flow wagon, a manure spreader fatality, a boy who drowned in a farm pond, one who drowned in a swimming pool, a sledding accident, and other tragic farm accidents motivated her to take action. "Putting this all together, you try to think, can we make a difference, can we do something? And from that we branched off into forming a committee and going with our first camp," said Mrs. Smith. "That one was so successful we've had three overnights and one day camp."

Campers arrived in the evening and checked into their cabins. They received farm safety T-shirts and played get acquainted games. Then there was a class on bicycle safety and a hands-on workshop where they made their own fire extinguishers. Following a fire safety lesson, ghost stories were told around a camp fire.

The following morning the

children learned about sun safety, lawn mower safety, and seat belts, and airbags. The morning's classes were punctuated by a graphic lesson on tractor and machinery safety given by farmers who themselves had been involved in accidents. In the afternoon there were lessons by a farm vet on animal safety, and by members of the Frederick County dive team on water safety.

4-H youth serving as camp counselors were: Amy Jo Harshman, Crystal Smith, Gary Shankle, and Bradley Smith. Safety Committee members and other volunteers helping at the camp were: Jane Smith, Mary Jane Roop, Peggy Garst, Lisa Gaver, Wayne and Jenny Rhoderick, Mike and Evelyn Wilcom, Ruth Lenhart, Brenda Nowell, Betsy Herbst, and Brenda Legget.

Kitchen help was provided by Laverne Heffner and her assistants. Marshall Savage, caretaker at the 4-H camp center, also helped with the camp.



Sixty children participated in the farm safety camp.

Smart Stuff

WITH TWIG WALKINGSTICK

What are wetlands?
Wetlands are just that — wet land. You'll find them in special areas that are in between a body of water and land. Wetlands can be soggy ground and they can be shallow ponds less than a couple feet deep.
The water level isn't the same year round. Sometimes there might not be much water in the area, so it seems dry. But for at least two weeks during the year the land can flood so much that it seems to be all water. Certain plants — like rushes, reeds, cattails, sedges and water lilies — grow in wetlands, too. And, wetland soil looks different because of the water sitting above it.
Environmental scientists call wetlands nature's kidneys. Your body's kidneys filter wastes and bad stuff in your blood. The liquid wastes become urine, and the clean blood keeps pumping through your body. Wetlands do the same thing for water.
Water moves through the wetland, where all the growing plants and aquatic life work like filters to absorb pollutants. Water pollution can come from a lot of different places, such as storm water runoff, factories, power plants and farm fertilizers. Once the wetland does its stuff, the water moves back into the river and on its merry way.
Before people realized the importance of wetlands, they drained the land so they could plant crops or build homes. Now, people are protecting the natural wetlands still around and building artificial wetlands to replace ones that have been destroyed.
Scientifically yours, Twig