

# Kids Korner

## Third Graders Learn How To Care For The Earth

Third grade students in the Tulpehocken School District were treated to an adventure recently.

Caretaker All was the theme of the curriculum material.

Six stations provided exposure to Caretakers of Animals, Plants, Water, Community, Soil and Resources and allowed students to interact with high school students developing leadership skills through the FFA. The adventure was hosted by Mor-Dale Farm, near Frystown, Berks County, owned and operated by Ralph and Crystal Moyer.

John Ratchie, DVM with Willow Creek Animals Hospital and Moyer spoke to the children about health, nutrition, safety and diagnosis of small and large animals. Ratchie emphasized prevention by using vaccines for such diseases as rabies, feeding the appropriate diet, exercise, adequate rest and plenty of fresh water. His dog Farley provided a treat for those needing to love an animal.

Ralph emphasized the feed consumed by the dairy animals which inhabit Mor-Dale Farm. He especially discussed cotton seeds utilized in the diet of ruminant animals for protein. The cotton seed being the by-product of the milling industry which produces the cloth making most of the T-shirts that student wore.

Caretakers of Plants John Falter, Berks County Extension Agent, and Master Gardeners Norman Reifsnnyder, and Donald Klein shared their vegetable gardening expertise. Students planted an entire garden of potatoes, carrots, radishes, peas, beans, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, and red beets.

What do plants need to grow was the question asked of the third grade participants. Their responses included sunshine for warmth, moisture provided by rain, and ground.

Students learned that tomatoes like warm weather, while peas prefer cooler temperatures. And when you consume an onion you are eating a bulb which is swelled-up leaves.

The farm pond provided a scenic spot for the Caretaker of Water Chip Karasin, Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center. "She asked the kids why things need water and what lives in water.

Students responded quickly on their note pads as they worked in groups. Bass fish, water bugs, tadpoles, frogs, birds and raccoons were found on students' lists. Everything needs water was resounded.

Students moved around the pond surveying it and gathering samples which they screened to separate its various life finds.

David Varone, Berks County Recycling Coordinator, and Lori Yack, Conestoga Land Fill, rewarded kids for their knowledge as Caretaker's of Resources. Varone utilized a collection of plastic, glass, aluminum, metal, etc. to discuss material which

can be recycled and the products produced such as plastic mats placed under play ground equipment.

Yalk utilized a landfill sandwich model to emphasize the detail taken when a landfill is constructed to prevent leachate from polluting the environment. She discussed the types of materials placed in a landfill. She also pointed out that materials that should be composted do not belong in landfills.

Randy McCormick, NRCS Caretaker of Soils, compared the naming of a soil in Pennsylvania to other state symbols. Students provided the following when questioned by McCormick; the state bird - Ruffed Grouse, and state Plant - Mt. Laurel.

"Our state soil is called the Hazeltown," McCormick said. This was done to celebrate 100 years of mapping soils in Pennsylvania.

Utilizing materials provided by the Berks County Conservation District students created a soil profile consisting of an A horizon, B horizon and C horizon. And then had the chance to ponder the questions, how long does it take to make an inch of top soil? Why are light soils cooler than dark soils?

A special treat at the Caretaker of Communities station was the Beef Council's Patty Melt product. Detective Cool utilized Patty melt and a food safety theme to crack his case. The 4 C's of food safety were portrayed; keep it cool, clean, covered and avoid cross contamination.

Pennsylvania Beef Council representative Tammy Weaver served as the Caretaker of the Community.

Special treats in the day's agenda were a milking demonstration in the parlor, a calf housing tour, and lunch grilled by the elementary school principals and advisory council members. Sire Power, through district manager Eldon Ford, provided ice cream for the participants prior to boarding the return buses sponsored by the local PTOs.

The day provides a great opportunity for high school students to interact with elementary school students.

Serving as tour guides were Joshua Folk, Garritt Randazzo, Kelly Dietrich, Jennifer Manbeck, Kelly Peifer, Jennifer Oxenreider, Michelle McMichael, Cindy Bray, Andrea Graeff, Lora Seiverling, Jill Vail, and Melanie Bicksler. Students assisting as caretaker assistants included Jessca Phillips, Melanie Kerschner, Jennifer Johnson, Clinton Baker, Todd Rebman, Matthew Forry, Holly Moyer and Elizabeth Loump.

Missy Folk and Joshua Krill acted as public relations assistants. FFA President Oralyn Folk was disguised as Patty Melt.

Third grade students and teachers from the Bethel and Penn Bernville schools participated in the event



Chip and the children looking for larvae in the pan of their discoveries from the pond.



Randy McCormick oversees students as they construct soil profiles.



Donald Klein gives third graders potato eyes to plant in the garden.

### Cow jokes - how "amooosing"

What would you get if you crossed a cow with a rabbit?  
*Hare in your milk!*

Where do you take a young cow to eat?  
*To the Calf-ateria!*  
Why was the calf so snobby?  
*He thought he was a cutlet above the rest!*