



Kids Stuff



Kindergartners explore the Fryelands Nature Park

By MELANIE RUSSELL

Kindergartners learning to describe their five senses got to try it out in a garden located at their school.

But it's much more than a garden with a few flowers and shrubs. No, this massive garden is something special, because it was made by past students, parent volunteers and school officials.

It was the first time in the school year that Sarah Jaffe's kindergarten class visited the Fryelands Elementary Nature Park last week, and students cannot wait to go back and see what else may be growing or living there.

For class, the kindergartners were able to 'taste' some of the kitchen herbs growing in the raised garden beds, such as sage and rosemary. They were able to 'hear' the sounds of the cars going by; to 'touch' the leaves and bird houses and

wet grass growing in the Nature Park; to 'smell' some of the few flowers left despite the November cold snap; and able to 'see' two bald eagle soar overhead as they explored the Nature Park.

"Look! Bald eagles! Wowwww," the students said in wonder and excitement. Some jumped up and down, unable to contain their joy at seeing two bald eagles clip the air just above the garden area, heading toward town.

"And a helicopter!" cried another student, who spotted a helicopter hovering in the distance over one of the highways in the county; all the other kids looked up, pointed and called their sighting of the helicopter.

So much to see, so much to do.

"It's their first time in here this year," Jaffe said. "So they're a little excited. I hope to bring them back out here more in the spring when the other classes have planted

things and my students can learn about how things grow; it could start a love for the (Nature Park) in kindergarten that can continue through their time here, and can encourage their future teachers to participate."

The Fryelands Nature Park was started by a group of parent volunteers with the help of local businesses in 2010, and it is meant to be a collaborative space for all students and teachers.

The main goal of the Nature Park is to have a sustainable places where students and teachers "can teach and learn using elements of our natural surroundings," according to school officials. The Nature Park was built in phases over the last several years, and the



Melanie Russell photo

Bundled up due to the early cold snap, Ms. Jaffe's kindergarten class and parent volunteers observe the teepee and tire planters in the Nature Park at Fryelands Elementary on Nov. 7.

parent volunteers are hopeful teachers continue to use the space to have outdoor classes, conduct art projects and science projects.

So far, several classes through the years have observed nesting birds in the windowed bird houses, rabbits living in the nearby blackberry bushes, and

Mason bees.

"I like the teepee," said Dalton Knee, 5.

"I like the teepee, too, and the poles for the teepee were made from a trampoline," said Jenna Hogle, 5.

Several items in the Nature Park are re-used such as an old trampoline, car tires — which are now planter boxes — the wood rounds, the bird houses and more.

"I like the broccoli, I tasted it," said Diamon Bylund, 5.

Other students were impressed with several of the flowers still growing in the cold and wet garden area.

"We picked sunflowers, but I don't like the seeds," said Aboos Adabi, 6.

"Yeah, and when we did, we found a lot of worms!" chimed in Saphira Yurth.

Jaffe gave the kindergartners five minutes to run around the woodchip path around the main hill of the Nature Park. At first, a nice line formed... then there was a race around the loop.

"Be sure you use your senses to observe your surroundings Slow down!" Jaffe called to her students.

The kindergartners hurried down the path, with a few veering off to explore on their own and to check out the planters and scenery. All were happy to be out in nature, if only for a little while.

The Fryelands Nature Park is funded through a spring benefit auction and community donations from businesses, families and friends.

Christmas Trees...

Bring the kids and make it a Family Tradition!





Pine box derby night

By MICHAEL WHITNEY

For math night at Frank Wagner Elementary in Monroe, almost the whole school wanted a chance to race.

It was the pine box derby, and the week prior kids and their parents built racecars. Math night was the chance to see how they'd do on a specially built track.

The palm-sized racecars came in many shapes and graphics: trucks and cars decorated with SpongeBob SquarePants, or speckles, or as a xylophone.

Grace Brettauer, 7, strapped a My Little Pony figure to her car. Her "driver" had gone shopping at Walmart, where her mom works.

Grace helped build it, her mom Beth said.

One boy gave his car rainbow stripes. Another painted his gold.

The races were a big hit. A line formed all the way to the back of the gym as more than 175 families built the cars.

To go faster, it is suggested to put more weight at the back of the car and shave the



photo courtesy of Monroe School District

Frank Wagner Elementary's Principal Vikki Berard (in white coat at the end of the racetrack) announces the races and keeps family math night fun on Nov. 8. Students surrounded the track to watch the wooden derby car races.

front end.

The cars are built from kits, said dad Ken Pamanian. Building them is a simple, good bonding experience. He joked that it was simple enough that he didn't quite have to pull out the power tools.

The track was a straight drag race down an incline, and a peg is released to launch the cars - similar to a much larger soap box derby.

Principal Vikki Berard took the mic to announce the races.

"I think he's got a career for the Indy 500!" she laughed after one race.

The idea came from one of the teachers with support from the booster club, Berard said. "It's all about families."

The math night also included making clocks to tell time, making alligator mouths to show how "greater than" and "lesser than" works and using pattern blocks to lay out designs.

Frank Wagner will hold a literacy night on Feb. 8 with an around the world theme.

Kids pick their top 10 toys

By TRIBUNE STAFF

Preschoolers at The Goddard School in Snohomish recently were part of an annual toy test to choose their favorites. They were testing new toys that will be coming out on the market.

The students selected these toys in no particular order as their top picks:

- The KID K'NEX Budding Builders Building Set, by K'NEX;
- SmartMax USA My First Safari, a toy that lets kids build mix and match animal parts to make crazy combos, by Smart Toys;
- Bucket Balls, a one-pound bucket of balls that expand using water, by DuneCraft;
- Monkey Around, a card game that prompts players to do movements together, by Peaceable Kingdom;
- Go! Go! Smart Wheels: Race and Play Adventure Park, a racetrack toy in a theme park, by Vtech;
- Lil' Critters Shake &



Doug Ramsay photo

From left, Sawyer Garrett, 3, North Rivera, 4, and Ben Crane, 3, play with the VTech Go! Go! Smart Wheels Race and Play Adventure Park, at The Goddard School in Snohomish back in September as part of the 10th Annual Toy Test. The results were released Nov. 1.

Wobble Busy Ball, a toy with buttons and other gizmos to develop hand/eye coordination and fine motor skills, by Vtech/Leap Frog;

Star Diner Restaurant Play Set, a make-believe diner with both cooking and serving roles, by Melissa & Doug;

OombeeCube, made up of textured, tethered shapes to exploring, by Fat Brain Toys;

Lil Lemonade Stand, a card game that builds memory skills, by Learning Resources;

Let's Go Code! Activity Set, which introduces children to early coding and programming ideas without electronics, also by Learning Resources.

Fun at local libraries

Snohomish Library
311 Maple Ave.

• LEGOZ Lab: Nov. 24 ~ Come and build to your heart's content using LEGOZ, Roylco straws, K'NEX, and more! This program promotes discovery and self-directed learning. For families. 2pm

• Curiosity Academy - Detectives: Dec. 1 ~ Have you ever dreamed of becoming a detective and solving crimes? Come follow the clues to find out "whodunnit"! 3pm

• Reading with Rover: Dec. 2 ~ Read aloud to a loving canine listener. For children with a caregiver. 11am

Mukilteo Library
4675 Harbour Pt. Blvd.

• Read with Carmen and Risa: Nov. 21, 28, Dec. 5, 12 ~ Read with one of these sweet therapy dogs for 15 minutes and receive a "pawtograph" souvenir. For school-age children. 3:30pm

Monroe Library
1070 Village Way

• Wii and Wii U: Nov. 21, Dec. 5 ~ Drop in for some video games on Wii and Wii U! Mario Cart, Smash Brothers, Nintendoland and more! 3:30pm

• Reading with Rover: Nov. 25 ~ Read aloud to a loving canine listener. For school-age children with a caregiver.



11am
• Card and Board Games: Nov. 28 ~ Choose from a variety of board and card games, bring your own favorite game to share, or battle your Teen Librarian using our Yu-Gi-Oh starter decks. 3:30pm

Holiday on the Bay

Come celebrate the holidays at the Port of Everett Marina Waterfront Center, 1205 Craftsman Way, on Saturday, Dec. 2 from Noon to 5 p.m.

Events will include:
• 5th Annual Everett Farmers Market Holiday Festival will feature more than 40 vendors and live music

• Toys for Tots Toy Drive to collect new, unwrapped gifts for children in need as well as a decorative wreath silent

- Create a holiday craft (one per child)
- Decorate holiday cookies (one per child)
- Holiday face painting and washable tattoos
- Holiday music and movies
- Free cocoa, cider and popcorn
- City of Everett fire truck rides
- Tree Lighting and Santa visit (5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)
- Mukilteo Yacht Club



Lighted Boat Parade (5:30 - 6 p.m.)