

CELEBRATING SOUTH DAKOTA

Celebrating South Dakota's 125 Birthday was a high point for Woonsocket 4th graders this fall.

The class hosted a living museum for the school and community. Each 4th Grader portrayed a South Dakota legend of new and old, such as Doane Robinson, Peter Norbeck, Guzman Borglum, Oscar Howe, Gladys Pyle, and Tom Brokaw.

During the living museum, each student referred to a biographical report with information about their legend. Woonsocket Fourth Grade Teacher Carrie Gutierrez said her students researched biographical information about the legends and prepared outlines before writing their reports. She proudly noted how great the two-month learning process was for class.

The 4th and 8th grade classes cooperated in hosting the 125th Birthday event at the school.

At one of the stations, the 8th Graders had written South Dakota trivia questions where participants could test their knowledge about the state. Santel Cooperative also sponsored a hands-on display about the history of the telephone in Sanborn County. The Dakotaland Credit Union's table highlighted the history of money which showed how money and coins have evolved over the last 125 years.

There were also hands-on displays of South Dakota animals and the state's unique geographical features. The students and adults could touch the animal displays and read where their habitat was located. The living museum was a fun experience for the school and community.



The 4th Graders especially loved telling the stories of their South Dakota Legends.

"It was fun to tell people about Harvey Dunn," 4th grade student Kristian Kesary said.

Gutierrez said her students were challenged by the creativity of the project and excited to see the rewards of their hard work, as a highlight for them was being participants in the living museum.

"The best part was being able to see all the people listen to us and learn," 4th grade student Dylan Klich said.



OUTDOOR EDUCATION

• *STUDENTS STUDY SWANS LIVING AT LAKE NEAR SCHOOL*

Woonsocket is the town with the beautiful lake and this lake exists right across the street from their school.

The district's teachers decided to take advantage of this lake as an outdoor classroom and have embarked on several projects with the lake as their focus while also using community assets and opportunities to design problem based learning experiences for their students.

The Woonsocket teachers designed the framework of all of these projects as part of the South Dakota Innovation Lab Summer Professional Development; coming together to collaborate with each other and teachers from surrounding communities to design classroom projects that brings the theories behind Student Learning Objectives and Teacher Effectiveness into actual applied practice.

The Kindergarten and 1st Grade classrooms are referring to their project as the Swan Condo Project.

The two swans that live on the lake lay eggs every year, but the eggs never hatch. This is a problem for the swans and a problem for the residents of the community that never get to see their swans with a family.

Students, along with their teachers Judy Hinker and Sarah Jensen, are devising a plan to track the swans' habits and also human impact on their swans to discover what factors might be contributing to the hatching problems. They started out learning more about the history of the lake and creating scaled models of the lake. Parents and community members were invited in to see the displays of the lake as it was in 1912 when it hosted a Water Festival complete with a Shoot the Shoots ride and a circus.

Another group of students created a design of the present day lake with attention to details like the number of street-lights and benches around the lake. The Kindergarten and 1st



grade kids intend to use the present day map to track where the swans are at different points during the day to help determine a better location for nesting structures for the swans.

The 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms are using the lake as a space to study water and land animals, fish, and birds that frequent the lake.

They worked together with the high school students to do soil sampling around the lake and learn more about the soil structure and what plants can be supported by it. Students tested water from the lake and are using that data to find out more about how fish and water birds are affected by the quality.

WOONSOCKET SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOME

>>> CONTINUED FROM [pg. 67]



Students have also been in contact with the development corporation in their community to devise a plan for building nesting structures for other birds that might want to make Lake Prior their home. This has been a long time concern of local residents and the 2nd and 3rd grade students are working on a plan together to improve the lake habitat and the quality of life in Woonsocket.

Fourth and 5th graders are partnering together to improve the recycling opportunities for their residents.

Students are working closely with a recycling firm, Vans Dray Recycling in Corsica, and collaborating with other schools that have implemented community recycling projects to design a plan for Woonsocket.

The first step of the project was to implement a paper recycling system in their school. Containers to collect the recyclable waste have been placed in every classroom and 4th grade students have been designated as the “Recycling Retrievers” and “Recycling Captains” to help monitor the collections.

The students had to write an application letter for each job, so that they could tell me their strongest attributes that would assist with the responsibility of collecting recycling.

“We think it is a good idea to recycle so that we can show the younger students, and maybe they will do recycling at home too,” Woonsocket Elementary Student Camden Jost said

The 5th grade students are weighing their recycling to check how much they are saving from the trash; they are using a luggage scale and 4th graders collect the paper from each classroom and package it for delivery to the recycling center.

Their goal is to get a recycling trailer for their community to share with a neighboring community.

Sixth grade students decided to take their status as the oldest students in the elementary to share the character traits



that make a good citizen with the younger students in their school.

They put together a plan to share the six pillars of character counts with the younger kids in the elementary and to also live by example. Their project culminated with a Veteran’s Day Program to demonstrate respect for those who have served our nation. Leading by example has become the words they live by.

