

Upland Elementary School celebrates diversity days in style with education, decorations, food and dance



Kimbra Fieldhouse with the Upland Elementary fifth grade students and two friends doing the Ombio on stage during diversity days. Fieldhouse spent three months in the South Pacific on a missions trip which is where she learned this dance.



Kimbra Fieldhouse, front and center in black has worked with the fifth grade students at Upland Elementary every Tuesday on this dance called the Ombio which is native to Cook Island located in the South Pacific.



Upland Elementary fifth grade students on stage during the diversity days with Kimbra Fieldhouse. They are showing students and parents alike a dance native to the Cook Islands in the South Pacific called the Ombio.

Musings from Mary

By Mary Ellen Orem

Are you as happy to see the sunshine as I am? Today is such a beautiful day, even though it is still cold. After all the snow and dreary, gray days we have had lately the sunshine is even more longed for. Still, this winter has been one of opportunity.

I live in the country now, and, after being away from my roots in Grant County for twenty-seven years while living in a big city, I returned two years ago to be among family. It is my good fortune to have a large kitchen window which looks out into the woods and feeders that draw many birds.

Many an hour has been spent watching their activities. So far I have counted fourteen species, including both Downy and Red-bellied Woodpecker, Purple Finches, Black-Capped Chickadees, Cardinals, Blue Jays, Doves, and Nuthatches to name but a

few.

Of course, I hope that the large hawk that came today finds something other than "my" birds to eat.

There are other residents too. Several weeks ago I went out on a snowy day to fill the feeder at the edge of the woods and, much to my extreme surprise, came within ten feet of two young does who were eating some of the corn I had put out for the squirrels.

Although I am aware that my nocturnal visitors included Raccoons and "Possums" I had thought, with deer being so shy, that I would never see them. It amazed me that I was able to get so close before they caught my scent.

It was very still and quiet, just at dusk. They blend in so well with the trees and fence that they were almost completely invisible. They are young, probably less

than a year old from the looks of them. Now they come every night and will, I hope, until warmer weather when they can find their normal forage.

On an earlier day I had taken a walk out into the woods and came upon a red fox standing by a fallen tree. We looked at each other and then we both went on our own way while I wondered if it was as surprised to see me as I was to see it. It was a beautiful sight.

What amazing experiences to be able to look directly into the eyes of a wild animal, even though it may be only for a brief time. When I was young I had an affinity for wild creatures but it has been many years since my childhood days on a farm east of Fairmount. How fortunate to have returned and have my own little nature preserve.

Goodbye 'til next week.
Mary

Mary Ellen Orem will write a weekly column for The Courier.

Upland residents travel the world during diversity days

Upland residents were able to travel the world last week at Upland Elementary School. Countries such as Japan, China, Mexico, Australia as well as other countries were studied by individual classes. The students then used what they learned to create crafts and decorate their classrooms to look like different parts of the world.

The week long celebration titled Diversity Days came to a head on Thursday night when the school opened their doors for an International Open House that included food, music and dancing.

Some of the foods offered on Thursday night included curried rice, baked bananas and cellophane noodles.

Kimbra Fieldhouse who recently returned from the Cook Islands in the South Pacific where she spent three months on a mission trip came to the school every Tuesday to work with the fifth graders on a dance known as the Ombio. The students along with Fieldhouse and two of her friends performed on the stage while people were eating.

Event trains gardeners and gets their hands dirty

By John Woodmansee
Extension Educator

Coming April 9, Purdue Extension - Grant County will host an advanced Master Gardener Training entitled, "Get Your Hands Dirty!" The event will feature the topics of plant propagation, soil testing, and container gardening. Open only to Purdue Master Gardeners and Master Gardener Interns, registration will be from 8:30-9:00 a.m., and the program will run

from 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available, but lunch will not be served. "This is a hands-on training," said John Woodmansee, Extension Educator for Purdue Extension in Grant County, "You will get your hands dirty!" Woodmansee says one of the goals of the program is not only to learn about these subjects, but to spark an aspiration to teach these subjects to others as a Master Gardener volunteer. The pro-

gram cost is \$20 if registered by April 1, and \$25 at the door. At least 15 people must be pre-registered to hold the event. If you decide to participate after April 1, please contact the Grant County Extension office no later than Friday, April 8, 4:00 p.m. to find out whether the event will be taking place. Program registration form and event flier may be downloaded on-line at www.ces.purdue.edu/grant or obtained by contacting the Grant County Extension office

at 765-651-2413. Purdue University is an equal opportunity/equal access institution.

News from Purdue University

Make Your Own Candy Workshop

Learn to make your own candy on Friday, March 11, 2005 at 10 a.m. in the Heritage Commons Activity Room, 100 Independence Parkway in Hartford City. The program will be presented by Betty E. Bagley the Consumer and Family Science Educator of Purdue Extension Blackford County.

Bagley will demonstrate how to make candy for St. Patrick's Day. The cost of the program will be one dollar per person.

This program is limited to twenty people. To make a reservation call the Blackford County Extension Office at 765-348-3213. The deadline for reservations is March 9, 2005.

What Kind Of Bird Are You?

Learn about various personality types with Bonnie Coon, CFS Educator of Jay County who will also discuss issues of retaining adult friendships. The program is scheduled for Monday, March 14, 2005 at 1 p.m. in the Heritage Commons Activity Room located at 100 Independence Parkway in Hartford City.

The registration deadline is March 11, 2005. The cost of the program is one dollar. Reservations can be made by calling the Blackford County Extension Office at 765-348-3213.

All You Can Eat Hog Roast

The Blackford County Extension Office will be hosting an all you can eat hog roast on March 12, 2005 at the Blackford County 4H Building in Hartford City.

Side dishes will include cheesy potatoes, green beans, desserts and beverages. There will also be pork manhattans available.

There will be free entertainment and a silent auction. The money raised will be used to send youth to 4H Camp and for 4H Science Workshops.

The cost is five dollars for adults in advance or six dollars at the door for those over thirteen. Youth ages six to twelve is three dollars and fifty cents in advance or four dollars at the door. Children five and under are free.

Advance tickets are available from fairboard members or from the Blackford County Extension Office. You can reach the extension office at 765-348-3213.

Landscape Design Program

The Blackford County Extension Office will be hosting a landscape design program on March 23, 2005 in the Hartford City Courthouse Annex.

Landscape 101, going beyond the yew bush will include the following topics: why landscape, developing a landscape plan, principals of design, picking the right plant and common landscape mistakes.

Reservations are required and need to be made before March 17, 2005. To reserve your place call 765-348-3213.

Grant County retired teachers meeting scheduled

The next meeting of the Grant County Retired Teachers Association will be Thursday, March 3, 2005 at the Sirloin Stockade in Marion at 11 a.m.

Bill Munn will be giving a program on the history of schools in Marion.

Van Buren sixth grade field trip

Steve Wolfe and Tiffany Bell from the Van Buren Elementary School submitted a request on Monday night to the school board to approve a camping trip to Camp Windigo in Matthews.

The trip which would only be one night would not interfere with regular classroom work. The trip would be April 29 and 30 or May 13 and 14 depending on availability of the campgrounds.

"We have surveyed the parents," Wolfe told school board members. "Many of them are willing to volunteer to go with us on the trip. We also want to get professors from both Indiana Wesleyan University and Taylor University to be involved in doing some classes with the kids."

Out of forty sixth grade students there were thirty-nine parents who said they would be interested in helping with the camping trip.

Currently the school is expecting the cost of the trip to be around five dollars per student. Supervising adults would not be charged.

The school board gave unanimous approval for the overnight camping trip.