

**East Hills 4-H**

**February Newsletter 2018**



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## **Harry Potter Project**

This month in the Harry Potter project, we made banners using the images from the first page of each chapter of the book 'The Sorcerer's Stone' and card stock. You got to pick out your house colors. I chose Gryffindor.

We cut the chapter pages and card stock out and then we glued them together. Next we punched holes in the sides of the banners to put ribbon through to hang them up.

## **Mushroom Madness at the Sycamore Grove Park**

In the January mushroom project meeting we went to the Sycamore Grove Park in Livermore for the "Mushroom Madness!" event. Most of the people at the event were not 4-Hers. Only two members from East Hills 4-H club came: Clementine and me.

We went on a hike to find mushrooms. The ranger who was leading our group showed us pictures of mushrooms. Some were edible, some not. The ranger said that we would probably not see a puffball mushroom. When we started the hike, surprisingly, we did find a puffball mushroom. Almost the entire group including Clementine and me tapped the puffball mushroom and the puffball mushroom gave off a mini dust cloud of white spores.

We continued the hike in a mini forest of oak trees. I was surprised that there were no death caps or destroying angels. At the end of the mini forest, I found logs that had some fungi on them. When the ranger saw the fungi on the logs, she said that those logs were used for ranger training and she didn't think that they would grow fungi on them.

We then looked for mushrooms in the nearby mulch pile. Most of us started looking at the mulch pile for mushrooms while the ranger looked in the bushes near the mulch pile. The ranger actually found an earthstar. The group also tapped the earthstar and a cloud of spores came out just like the puffball mushroom, except these spores were brown. After the ranger collected the earthstar we kept on searching for mushrooms. No more mushrooms were found so we went to the next mulch pile. No luck on the second mulch pile, either. The ranger said that the other group had probably collected all the mushrooms that were there.

On our way to the Old Winery I spotted turkey tails growing on some deadwood. After the ranger told us more about turkey tails, a boy found a tiny mushroom growing on another piece of deadwood. The ranger did not pick this mushroom since it looked too happy growing on the deadwood. We walked closer to the winery, looking for more mushrooms, when Clementine and I found a pile of bones. We told the ranger about the bones. The ranger came to the site where we found the bones, and found a skull. He said it was probably from a deer. Another girl found more mushrooms near the bones. That was another mushroom added to our collection.

Soon the Mushroom Madness project meeting was over; it was time to go home. Before we went home, Clementine and I played for a while in a replica of an Indian hut.



### **NaNoWriMo Project**

In the East Hills 4-H NaNoWriMo project we wrote novels. NaNoWriMo is short for National Novel Writing Month where people who like writing challenge themselves and help each other to write a novel and become a writer.

We started with a nice preparation for our novel in October, so we could be ready to start writing our novels on the first of November. We used the Young Writers Program Manual and character worksheets. In the character worksheets we created the characters that were going to be in our novel. We created the main character, supporting characters, and villains.

In the NaNoWriMo project meetings we played fun games that helped us think up stories. We played story cards and story cubes. We also had two Skype meetings with real authors who wrote and published a lot of novels. They gave us tips on how to get through difficult aspects of writing, like writer's block. They also gave us some tips on how to write a novel, and how to choose a title.

We used the Young Writers Program of NaNoWriMo to write our novels. This is a software package that is really helpful with word counting, goal setting, managing progress and tips for young writers. There were also planners that helped us to make our novel, like: the beginning, where the main character's adventure starts, the rising action, the climax, the falling action and the conclusion. Our Adult Leader Desirae King sent us dares every morning with the ideas to include in our stories. The dares were usually related to something that happened to our leader that day. My favorite dare was to include the word "crystal" in the story, because my main character name was Chrystal.

I wrote 15 000 words in November and reached the climax part of my story. My novel is about a girl who really wants to meet a witch or a wizard, but at the same time make

sure her magic transferring powers stay unnoticed. She also has to find a way to get into the Tunnel of Safety, which is the best way to go to the place where she can meet a friendly witch or a wizard, but the Tunnel is blocked.

I like the NaNoWriMo project because you get to write, you get to challenge yourself, and you might even be able to publish your novel!

### **Underwater Explorers Adventure**

As a part of my individual exploration for the Marine Science project, I went to a class called Underwater Explorers at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

I checked in, and the person who was responsible for the group made sure everyone was there and then we walked to the place where we put on our scuba gear and met our instructors. There were only 3 kids in our group, so everyone got their own instructor. My instructor name was Angela. First I took off my shoes and socks and put on wool socks and pants. Then we listened to the rules. Angela checked my shoe size and then I put on the waterproof shoes. Then I put on the woolen sweater and Angela helped me put on a dry suit. Another aquarium employee helped me put on my head-piece and my air tank.

After that we walked into the water. Angela help me put on my flippers and I started my underwater adventure with swimming to a rock. The rock was covered with hermit crabs and snails. Angela let me hold a hermit crab but after a while I accidentally dropped it because I was getting a little too close to a sea anemone Angela didn't notice. We swam on to another location. We saw an abalone shell. The abalone shell had holes in it so Angela and I gave each other mermaid baths. We swam on. We saw green anemone and saw some kelp. Angela told me that kelp was needed for a healthy environment. We also saw a baby sea anemone growing on the kelp.

In another location there were two rocks very close together and in the crevice there was a sea cucumber. I learned that a sea cucumber throws up its food to scare away predators. Near the location where we saw the sea cucumber we saw a Gumboot chiton. Gumboot chiton are similar to abalones except their shells are usually more squishy since they usually get covered up in algae. I saw a lot of fish.

As we were swimming I also saw something that looked like a sea fan. I told Angela and she swim back and got the "sea fan". It turned out that's what I thought was a "sea fan" was actually red kelp. Angela also brought back red algae. We found some more abalones. There was a piece of broken kelp nearby so Angela caught the floating piece of kelp and tried feeding it to the abalone. but I guess the abalone wasn't very hungry. At least five feet away from the abalone we saw a monkey faced eel. At first I thought that was a grouper until Angela told me it was a monkey faced eel.

Angela caught another piece of floating kelp and tried to feed it to the monkey face eel. Angela tried twice. The first piece of kelp completely missed the rock crevice where the monkey faced eel was hiding, and the second piece landed on the monkey face eel's

head. The monkey faced eel jerked its head up, the kelp floated in the water for a while and then came back down on the monkey face eel. Then was time to go back to the place where we started.

On our way back we saw some sea stars and mermaid purses. Mermaid purses are actually shark eggs. When we were in the shallows where I could stand, I was about to step on what looked like solid ground, when Angela pointed down where I was stepping and I quickly pulled my leg back. I was about to step on a huge decorator crab! We swam away from the decorator crab.

Angela helped me take off my flippers. When we got on land, other aquarium employees helped me take off my air tank and my headpiece and mask. Then Angela helped me take off my dry suit. I took off my sweater, wool pants and waterproof shoes. I put on my own shoes, then Angela gave me a little booklet. Inside the booklet were coloring pages. Angela and I completed the gear page, what you found page, what you learned page, and the diver certificate. I got a waterproof sticker saying Underwater Explorers, and a pass for hot chocolate. I thanked Angela, then mama, papa and I went to get the hot chocolate.

I really recommend trying Underwater Explorers, because you can learn more about sea animals, you can learn about scuba diving, and you can see a lot of cool creatures.



## **Word Crafts Project**

In the February Word Crafts Project meeting we made crossword art with wooden Scrabble tiles.

The idea of it is to start with one word, and spell another word with one of the letters in the first word so they cross over each other and make one continuous line, you repeat as many times as you want.

We each picked out a giant piece of colored paper and started with spelling our names.

We then chose words that we liked or felt described us.

After we chose our words me and most of the other members in the project added one word each to each other's paper.

Once we finished picking out our words we glued them down onto our pieces of paper