

**‘World’ comes to South Elementary: Careers program designed to spark students’ interest**

*By Katie Kazimir, The Journal*

HARRINGTON — Whispers and giggles filled the gymnasium of Lake Forest South Elementary in



**DeAngelo McAfferty, Chewy Shade, Shane Vincent, Jordan Manis and Sarah Perez dig their hands into raw ingredients that Tilcon Delaware uses to manufacture asphalt.** The Journal/Katie Kazimir

Harrington last Wednesday as third-graders filed in for the “What in the World?” career program, sponsored by the Business Industry Education Alliance of Kent County.

“This is the second year South Elementary has hosted this program,” said third grade teacher Clay Beauchamp.

The program, which travels to schools throughout the state, focuses on raising awareness for elementary school-aged children in careers that use math, science and technology.

Volunteers from community industries use mystery objects to help explain how technology, science and math are involved in their work.

Among the mystery objects scattered along the perimeter of the South Elementary gym were a table with tubs full of rocks, a fireman and a cluster of stuffed animals — the kind that used to be alive.

Each time the “What in the World?” program is hosted by another school, it is different, because the volunteer presenters are rarely the same.

“We’ve got the most presenters I am probably going to see this year right here,” said Charles Spierling, program coordinator for the Business Industry Education Alliance.

The volunteers represented the Delaware State Fire School, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, the Delaware State Police, Tilcon Delaware Inc., the Kent Conservation District, the Delaware Solid Waste Authority and Bayhealth Medical Center.

Each presenter was given a table along the walls of the gym, and 10 minutes to talk with a small group of students about their mystery object. After 10 minutes, a whistle was blown and the children moved clockwise around the room to the next table.

The mystery objects led to discussions that ranged from landfills and recycling with the Solid Waste Authority, to crime scene investigation with representatives from the state police.

A hands-on approach was taken by Norene Brennan of Tilcon Delaware Inc. as she used examples of raw asphalt ingredients to discuss the manufacturing of roadways.

Students were allowed to dig their hands into the various ingredients, which included rocks, as Ms. Brennan explained the equipment and technology used in creating asphalt.

“It looks like there are potato chips in it,” said student Shane Vincent as Ms. Brennan held up an example of a completed chunk of road.

In the corner of the gym, the Delaware State Fire School sparked interest and captured the children’s imaginations with a live fireman, Lee Johnson, in full firefighter regalia.

After the children were told about fire safety and the technology involved in putting out a fire, they were shown basics of first aid.

“This is a blood pressure cup, and this is how you measure blood,” said Mary Conner, representative of the fire school, as the children lined up

to have their blood pressure read.

“It doesn’t hurt?” asked Jacob Hayes as he watched his classmate have the cup strapped around her arm and pumped tight.

Across the room, Tina Watson of Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, a regular on the “What in the World?” circuit, used animals that had obviously played a visit to the taxidermy shop after they expired to explain about the environment of marsh animals.

“That’s what we do at Bombay Hook, is maintain habitats for wildlife,” said Ms. Watson.

The use of the animals as props seemed to grab the children’s attention as they stroked the raccoon’s fur and peeked inside the bill of a goose.

“The animals are cool and cute,” said third-grader Kristy Hayes.

“(Ms. Watson) might spark interest in these kids and one of them may become a naturalist,” said Mr. Spierling.

By the end of the program, the students were exposed to careers in engineering, conservation, biology, auditing and forensic science.

The “What in the World?” program is anticipating reaching a total of 1,500 children in Kent County this academic year.

The Business Industry Education Alliance of Kent County, a nonprofit organization, relies on volunteers to make the program work, and is always recruiting more volunteers.

For further information on the program and others similar to it, visit [www.schooltowork-del.org](http://www.schooltowork-del.org), or contact Charles Spiering at 730-1151 or [cspiering@msn.com](mailto:cspiering@msn.com).

Staff writer Katie Kazimir can be reached at [ckazimir@newszap.com](mailto:ckazimir@newszap.com) or 674-3600, ext. 6339.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**Want more local stories?**

[Click here](#) to go to our Archives. Type in a key word like the same of

your town where it asks for "word one". Then click "Start Search" to see other stories that have included your key word.

**Want regional classified ads?**

[Click here](#) to go to our regional Classified Ads.

---

#### SPONSORED LINKS

**SPONSORED LINKS:** Your name and brief message drives visitors to your site! [CLICK HERE FOR INFO.](#)

**OTHER NEWSZAP COMMUNITIES:** Local links and information about your community. [NEWSZAP.COM.](#)

**NEWSZAP.COM:** Local communities. Individual voices. [CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE.](#)

**REQUEST A LINK:** We will place a link to your website on newszap.com for FREE. [CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS!](#)

**Article posted on-line March 6, 2007**  
**Newszap.com (*Harrington Journal*)**