

PARTING SHOTS

A weekly snapshot from The Daily Astorian and Chinook Observer photographers



Walking the dogs.

DAMIAN MULINIX — EO Media Group

Camp: Program teaches wildneress survival, night hikes

Continued from Page 1C

Ocean Park Elementary teachers Melissa Linquist and Tracie Lorimor said they wanted the current fifth-graders to have a fun memory at the end of the year and more time to bond before they enter the new elementary.

OMSI runs a regular outdoor school program at Camp Kiwanilong and offers teachers a wide array of lessons and activities to choose from — everything from wilderness survival to night hikes and lessons about coastal weather. Teachers can tailor these offerings to better supplement lessons they are already working on with their classes. Linquist and Lorimor’s students have been studying coastal ecology so an outdoor school with OMIS made sense.

The fifth-graders chasing each other across the grass — playing a game with no apparent rules but with victors announced by riotous shouts — are a sort of test group. Ilwaco Elementary is just one of many changes the middle school has weathered recently. This school year alone, the middle school took on sixth-grade classes, had one principal resign and an interim principal take his place, experimented with student-directed learning techniques and purchased computer tablets for students to use for both homework and state testing. In September, a new principal comes on board who will oversee the middle school operations as well as the newly formed Ilwaco Elementary.

Coastal kids

While the plane crash “survivors” gathered moss and branches to build shelters, another group of fifth-graders sat giggling in a small, open building near the trees.

In front of them were different-colored lunch trays that held not food, but slimy, tentacled things — squid — purple and pink and very dead.

The students prodded at the creatures, seemingly unsure how they should react: with glee or with the most contorted, grossed-out, “ewwww” face they could muster. Most of them settled on glee.

“I love that you are excited about these squid,” said OMIS outdoor school instructor Kate John. She asked them what they noticed about the squid. They said: squishy, pretty, slimy, eww-what-is-that-is-that-its-eyes?!

When John asked them if they were ready to dissect, the answer was a resounding, “Yay!” And when she said a stringy piece of tissue connected to the mouth looked “an awful lot like a booger,” they were utterly delighted.

All of her students have been to the beach, said Linquist. They are surrounded by sand, coastal trees and plants, sea birds, rain, clouds, and waves. That does not mean they understand it all or could explain it. At the outdoor school, though, students discovered why sand can be different colors and learned to identify plants and animals. Linquist saw it all starting to click.

“They just got it,” she said.



An Ocean Park Elementary fifth-grade student begins the initial cuts to dissect a squid at an OMIS outdoor school program held at Camp Kiwanilong in Warrenton April 27 to 29. Teachers said the program was a way to cement lessons about coastal ecology and a time for students to bond as they prepare to head to a newly formed elementary school for fifth- and sixth-graders at the Ilwaco Middle School building in September.

KATIE WILSON — EO Media Group

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