

Education

Cable Sends Kids Around The World

What 14-year-old Sean Ness can't forget is the car. It was no bigger than a pup tent and about as shapely. He'd never seen one so small. Yet it carried a whole East German family.

Now here it was, right in front of his eyes - and 3,000 miles away. How can that be? Last May, Sean was among eight eighth-graders at Lawrenceville's Sweetwater Middle School who took an electronic field trip to Berlin. From his school's computer lab, he watched a program about World War II and talked live with experts and Berliners.

"I wish we could have more classes like this," Sean said. So does Turner Adventure Learning, which conducted the Berlin field trip for

some 200,000 students nationwide. This unit of Atlanta-based entertainment conglomerate Turner Broadcasting System Inc. is trying to sell schools - for a profit - on a new way of learning.

The "field" trips, which use computers, cable TV and satellites to transport children around the world, are divided into three consecutive one-hour sessions. In addition to Berlin, Turner Adventure has taken students to the Rift Valley in Kenya, the Gettysburg battlefield in Pennsylvania and the Okefenokee swamp in Georgia.

At each place, there were experts and residents who answered students' questions. They did so by telephone or through electronic mas-

saging on America Online, the commercial computer online service.

"It's much better than reading a textbook," says Laura Frick, an eighth-grader at Berkmar High School in Lilburn, where students also have taken electronic field trips.

Laura's words are just what Gary Rowe wants to hear. He runs Turner Adventure. And Rowe's looking for kids and teachers interested in a learning experience outside textbooks and lesson plans.

"We're putting the idea out in the schools and asking teachers and students to help us finish this invention," says Rowe. Many are skeptical. "We're trying to inspire schools to do new things," Rowe says. "We're asking them to set aside the bell

schedule for a few days. "Some schools are ready and jump on the opportunity," adds Rowe. Many others are not. While schools may be reluctant, kids are not, Rowe says.

"What they like is live experience," he explains. "They want real-world stuff." That means children studying Gettysburg "want to know what it felt like to carry a heavy rifle wearing a wool uniform in 90-degree heat," according to Rowe.

For Sean, seeing the car, the Trabant - then talking about it with an East German teenager - triggered a revelation. "I had no idea how different other places are from my home," he says, still slightly amazed.

School Bond Measure Wins Endorsement

The League of Women Voters of Portland is recommending a "yes" vote on the Portland Public School District bond measure, 26-31.

The league said it supports quality education in the public schools. As part of achieving that goal, the league believes that all schools should have adequate physical facilities. It supports the effort to make Portland's school buildings and physical facilities meet state and local safety and sanitation standards.

The ballot measure is a \$196.7 million general obligation bond which will cost property owners about 80 cents per year for each \$1,000 of assessed value on their homes. The money is designated for technology upgrades, for safety and code compliance, for major maintenance and for building improvements, equipment and emergency repairs.

Ballots for the election will be mailed to voters Oct. 23 and are due in the election's office on Nov. 7. Voters must be registered with the county clerk's office by Oct. 17.

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Putt For Education Helps Local Schools

The putting greens are closed and the results have been tallied. Putters of all ages helped raise more than \$96,000 for local schools during Washington Mutual's third annual Putt for Education contest.

The checks, ranging from \$50 to \$2,300, are being distributed to 665 public and private elementary schools, junior highs, high schools and colleges in Oregon and Wash-

ington as part of Washington Mutual's sponsorship of the Pro-Am at the Fred Meyer Challenge golf tournament.

Between June and August, Washington Mutual sponsored 59 Putt for Education events. Members of the general public were invited to attempt to sink three out of three putts and win \$50 donations to the school of their choice.

This was the third year Washington Mutual sponsored Putt for Education. In 1993, \$50,000 was raised for schools. Last year, successful putters raised that total to \$71,000.

"We're very excited to help local schools through the Putt for Education," said Mike Amato,

Washington Mutual's senior vice president for Oregon consumer banking. "Schools are the cornerstones of

our neighborhoods and we feel it's important to support their work."

Putt for Education is a program of Washington Mutual CAN! (Committed Active Neighbors), the company's community involvement program. For decades, Washington Mutual and its employees have been actively involved in helping make their communities better places to live and work.

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Columbia Villa To Create Child Development Center

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has awarded a \$200,000 Early Childhood Education Demonstration Project grant to the Columbia Villa/Tamarack (CV/T) Resident Council.

The council applied for the grant last June in response to a survey of residents to determine areas of most need. Residents listed child care as the number one priority and a major obstacle in seeking training or employment. Of the 598 housing units at CV/T, 478 are family units with a total of 1,099 children under age 14.

The objectives of the grant are to develop a seven-day, 12-hour per-day child development center and also to develop an in-home child care program that provides training, support and oversight for in-home child care providers.

Under these guidelines, children of CV/T resident will benefit from a center with a developmental orientation rather than just providing basic child care. Resident parents will gain by having dependable, quality care for their children so that they can pursue educations, training or employment.

"We are very pleased to receive this grant," said Susan Franks CV/T Resident Council President. "Children will receive guidance under an excellent curriculum and enjoy hearty meals and snacks, all within a safe, healthy environment. Parents benefit by having a major obstacle removed from seeking employment and job training."

Director of the Child Development Center will be Pat Trotti, who currently directs a Great Start Program. "Together," at CV/T that serves 70 young children. Additional staff will be recruited from CV/T residents and trained by Trotti.

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