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"Whenever we go outside, they all do one or two laps just to get warmed up and get some exercise," Gauderman said. "They don't have to run; they can walk, they can crawl, they can roll — I don't care as long as they go around that track."

The club keeps track of the laps, and kids can earn prizes for completing every mile.

After time outside, the kids come in to learn their "Daily Destinations." These lessons include geography, science and history. Last summer, the kids learned about the United States, learning about two states at a time.

"This year, our Daily Destination is outer space and we learn about a planet each week," Gauderman said. "We even count Pluto, because when I grew up, Pluto counted, and we have nine weeks of summer, and this way we have nine planets."

Each week starts with an introduction to the planet, followed by activities. Kids can even learn more at home and bring back information to share.

After the lesson and when the kids start to get antsy, they get more free time. At BGC, kids can read, draw, put together puzzles, play with building toys and play "Just Dance" on the Wii. Kids can also play educational games on the computer for a maximum of 15 minutes every day.

"The whole time they are here, they're learning," Trent said. "That's really the difference between having a childcare center and a youth development center, and we're the youth development center. That means the kids are always going to be participating in programs, because the programs are really what makes this place successful."

The Elementary Program is open to students who have completed kindergarten on up. According to Gauderman, having real classroom experience helps the kids stay focused even in the looser format of the summer program. It also helps with the variety of Brain Gain activities.

"Our Community Builders help with teamwork, movement, life skills and name recognition," Gauderman said, to name a few of the lessons that are part of the activities.

Monday's games included a version of "monkey in the middle," where students had to guess which of the other children was holding a toy banana behind their back, and a blind-fold game that required kids to find their partner while blind-folded. As a lesson, the games showed the kids the importance of spatial awareness and using all their senses.

In addition, the games and activities often require kids to answer questions aloud, demonstrate motions and stand in front of their peers.

"It teaches the kids that when they have to speak in front of a group, they can do it in safe and fun way," Gauderman said. "When they actually do it for a project, it's a whole lot less intimidating."

The kids get to act out skits, and one activity had them create storyboards and move characters to create a story. The other kids got to engage with the process while munching on popcorn and enjoying the show.

"When you have these kinds of programs, you have kids from every kind of background that you can possibly imagine," said Trent. "One of the kids is diabetic, so Sam and her team have gone through training on what to watch for, how to test, all that kind of stuff. We don't just do one thing here."

BGC's staff has trained to be ready for any student's needs, including those that don't speak English as a first language or those with medical issues.

The club has four full-time staff and nine part-time employees at the Elementary and Teen Programs. They are a mix of men and women, which is significant, according to Trent.

"Some of these kids don't have a dad or mom, so it's really important to have positive role models," he said. "For some of them, the only positive role model they are going to have is at school or at the club. Having grown up myself without a dad, I know what that's like."

BGC also works to expose its club members to diverse community interaction through both weekly field trips and visits from a variety of organizations.

"Every Friday, the elementary does field trips," Gauderman said. "The teens do Fridays and some Wednesdays. Sandland Adventures is always

our kickoff. We get to ride the blue sandrails, and this year we needed two of them."

According to one little girl, "We're going to Cape Perpetua on Friday. I've been to Cape Perpetua before on a school field trip."

"Can we go in the ocean?" a boy asked Trent. "Can we climb up the mountain? I've done that before. It hurt climbing."

Other field trips for the Elementary Program have involved Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River, Fred Meyer and City Lights Cinemas, where the kids get to pick out their own snacks.

"For many of these kids, they don't get to go to the movies, let alone have popcorn and candy," Trent said. "Michael Falter at City Lights is one of our biggest supporters. He has been so kind to us and is just awesome." Gauderman added, "The kids get the whole theater to themselves and afterwards pick up their mess. We leave it spotless, so Michael has said we can come back anytime."

Each Thursday, BGC hosts safety lessons. So far, Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue brought a fire engine, Florence Police officers talked about safety, a ranger from the U.S. Forest Service presented the Hug-A-Tree program, Central Lincoln PUD taught about electricity and power lines, and Western Lane Ambulance District taught first aid and helped fit bike helmets for kids.

"Sometimes, because kids have a lot of energy, we're sitting there wondering how

much they are actually absorbing," Trent said. "Then the parent will come in the next day and say, 'My kid came home and wouldn't stop talking about it.'"

Gauderman continued, "These kids have a lot of questions, and you never know what they're going to be when they grow up. They get to see their real-life hero in action. They teach their parents a lot, too. Especially about outer space, which they love. They go home and talk about space all night and every night."

"What's important about that as well is that we want the kids to have a good relationship with first responders," Trent added. "Having a good relationship with the police, fire department and Western Lane Ambulance out here gives them a chance to get to know them."

Many of the visitors have had their own kids come through BGC's program, which can help build relationships as well.

"It's really bringing the community together," Gauderman said. "We're a small town, and it's nice to have the community involved with our kids."

Trent asked, "You know that old saying, 'It takes a village to raise a child?' It's not true. It takes an army. Just ask these guys!"

After a morning of activities, the Food Service Program served lunch to the kids. On Monday, it was hamburgers, strawberries, snow peas and cartons of milk. The no-bake cookies were the snack for later



Boys & Girls Club Elementary Program members play Community Builder games during the summer program.

in the day.

"We make accommodations for any of the kids that are vegetarians, have restrictions or have food allergies," Trent said. "When parents sign them up initially, we try to know if the kids have any medical conditions, food allergies, asthma, all stuff that we have to pay attention to."

BGC staff undergoes training to help in these situations. Gauderman will attend her second site director training soon, with lessons that she plans to bring back to the rest of the staff.

"You have to do everything," Trent said. "You have to serve —"

"You're the food person, you're janitorial, you're the doctor," Gauderman interjected.

"— if somebody gets a cut, you have to do first aid," Trent finished. "It's whatever it takes. There's never two days that are ever alike. It's always different because the kids are always different."

For those who have said BGC staff members "just

watch kids all day," Gauderman said nothing could be further from the truth. Staff plan and implement curriculum, run activities, provide counseling and cater care to each kid, all while keeping up with the energy of 30 elementary students.

The rest of the club's day is equally planned out, with additional free and structured time included before parents come in for check out at 5:30 p.m.

While the kids ate lunch and began their quiet reading period, Gauderman looked over at her staff.

"It's a teamwork effort for sure. For everybody who is here, their passion is kids," she said. "It makes it a lot easier."

"Just look at their faces," Trent said, looking at the kids. "You see the joy. Kids can be kids here. No matter what their circumstance is, they come here, it's a safe place and they can just be kids."

On Saturday, read about BGC's Teen Center and the club's work to educate and prepare students. For more information, visit bgcwc.org.

7th Annual Florence Area COMMUNITY-WIDE GARAGE SALE September 13-15, 2019

How To Participate

The fee to participate is \$20. An ad for the Community Wide Garage Sale with a map of all participation sales will be published in the Siuslaw News on September 11th and 14th. Because of print deadlines, the registration deadline is 5pm Thursday August 30 2019.

You will also receive two official Community Wide Garage Sale signs as well as a tip sheet on how to have a great sale. Maps will be available in the Siuslaw News, online and at the Florence Visitors Center.

Please post signs only on private property with the owner's consent. Posting signs on City utility poles, street or signal light poles, and median strips is against the municipal code.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____

Subdivision name (if any) _____

Dates (CIRCLE): Friday 9/13 Saturday 9/14 Sunday 9/15

Times: _____

15-word description:(Date, times and address are included. Addition words over 15 are \$0.50 each.)

Grid for description details

Add'l Words _____

Bring form and payment to 148 Maple St in Historic Old Town or mail to Siuslaw News PO Box 10, Florence, OR 97439 Call 541-902-3526 | florencechamber.com Deadline is August 30th at 5pm to be included on the map.



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