



MEET ABBY: Abby the alligator was one of a number of scaly guests who came to Maples Independent Country School last Monday as part of the school's science week. Handler Cheryl Macfarlane of the Hamilton Travelling Reptile Show explained the habits of Abby and the other animals, and encouraged students to handle the critters.

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Comment

Youth festival a fabulous success

By Pamela Claridge

Last week was a fabulous week for those lucky enough to spend it at the Dufferin Youth Festival of the Arts (DYFA), at Orangeville Baptist Church.

Now I will admit that, as a music teacher, I am slightly prejudiced in favour of the whole arts scene, but this was a wonderful, exciting and enlightening week.

It was a week of presentations by the Dufferin elementary and secondary schools, private schools, some schools from the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and public schools in Alton, Erin and Brisbane.

Sponsors/supporters of this project were Dufferin Arts Council, Theatre Orangeville, Carters Professional Corporation, the Upper Grand District School Board and Orangeville Baptist Church.

Not only did we have music, we had dance, Improv, chimes, bells, black light musical theatre, but a wonderful art display as well. And 18 schools displayed what's creating excitement in their schools in the visual arts.

It was a week of finding out what wonderful things some teachers are doing in their classrooms, despite not having a lot of funding with which to run an arts program. These dedicated teachers obviously feel that the "arts" are important to the development of their students and are prepared to go to great lengths to provide that stimulus.

This is the 12th year that the DYFA has been presented and is entirely due to the dedication of its leaders and volunteers. This project was started 12 years ago by a group of parents and educators who were concerned about the cuts in funding to the arts programs in their schools and who met with representatives of the Upper Grand District School Board to find out what they could do to help.

Since the beginning Wendy Carter has been the driving force behind this project and over the years she has amassed a group of more than 50 volunteers who give of their time to help out. Many of the vol-

unteers are retired teachers and principals. Jaime Wounters has since joined as co-coordinator.

Many of the volunteers take up individual jobs, such as registrar, volunteer co-coordinator, visual arts co-coordinator, stage manager, communications and media. There are also principal and teacher advisors. As in previous years, DYFA had two emcees, who managed to keep the whole week going. Theatre Orangeville's David Nairn and Bernadette Hardaker. Both were upbeat and fun the entire week, keeping the students interested and under control (no mean feat!).

The week began with presentations from the Westside Secondary School Band, and the rest of the morning included music from the East Garafraxa Public School band; the Westside Secondary Guitar ensemble (with vocalist); the Laurelwoods Elementary choir and chime choir (directed by a volunteer); the Montgomerie Village choirs and recorder group; the Westside drama group; and the Parkinson

Centennial Public School presenting Stomp, records and song, chant and song and song and march.

Each morning ended with everyone singing "Sing Sing."

Tuesday featured the Erin District School High Band; the Princess Margaret Junior and Senior Bands; St. Benedict Elementary School's singers and a presentation of the opening song of the musical they are presenting this month; the Princess Margaret Primary School choir; the Erin Public School Grades 7 and 8 Band; the Brisbane Public School French Immersion Grade 3 Singers; and the Ross R. McKay Public School grade 6 Pop Star.

Wednesday opened with the Orangeville District Secondary School Band and included the Credit Meadows Elementary School with an excerpt from Rock Around the Block; and finishing with Centennial

ODSS, CMES and Princess Margaret PS; Island Lake Public School choir and drummers; The Maples Independent Country School band and the Grade 5 quartet and grade 4 singers; Mono Amaranth Public School with singers and ukuleles, the MAPS choir and the Drum Circle.

Thursday saw the band from Centre Dufferin District High School in Shelburne open the proceedings. Next came the Orangeville Christian School with Black Light Dance, recitations, recorders and band; Hyland Heights Elementary School Grade 5 singers (presenting an original song written by their teacher) and the Primary Folk Dancers; Manchester Montessori School with their band and a French skit; Primrose Elementary School with an excerpt from Rock Around the Block; and finishing with Centennial

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