

# Ecology Center Newspaper Articles



Oldtimers say that the first classes were held during the 1880's in a small building on the Day property.

In 1888 a wood-frame school with bell-tower and front porch was built on the Wilmot acreage, about one-half mile up from the junction of the west and east forks of De Luz Creek. The setting was picturesque, with groves of live oaks and sycamores, and wild blackberries and grapes all along the creek. Years later, when the building was torn down, John Kuhnis used the lumber to build his house.

In the register for 1890 the district was called the Santa Rosa District. There were nineteen pupils enrolled, with these pioneer families represented: Camp 2, Carr 2, Day 3, Heylmann 4, Sherman 1, Moeller 1, Stewart 2, Wilmot 3, and Behre 1. In 1908 the district was named the Tenaja Joint District, with children from both Tenaja and De Luz attending. The 1909 register mentions that Recluse (Tenaja) had classes on Saturdays.

Other families mentioned in more than one register included: Garnsey, Brode, Hill, Tittle, Leslie, Orvis, Ferrero, Stoner, Prah, Tiffany, and Herron. Felix Garnsey graduated from 8th grade in 1922, Ruth Garnsey and Carl Prah in 1924.

Some of the teachers in the first school were: Len Harvey, Annie Howard, Nona Reid, Miss Harrison, Lillian White, Lillian Greenfield, Faith Ferbitz, Eunice Ward, Lillie Cosner, Laura Noble, Mildred Dubb, Hazel Butts, and Vivian Miller.

The new school, De Luz Elementary, was built in 1927 on the present De Luz-Murrieta Rd. The board members, including Louis J. Garnsey, argued about architectural style, and the midwest design, favored by other board members, prevailed over the mission one.

All eight grades were taught by one teacher, and this person usually lived with one of the families, as was the rural custom. Sometimes, to help with family income and also to keep up the enrollment for average daily attendance, families boarded children who needed foster homes, and the county inspected the homes and paid for room and board. If teachers had children, that helped the enrollment too.

In 1968 the board and community reluctantly decided to close the school. The building had no bond beams and did not meet the mandatory Field Act Earthquake Protection Standards. Also the enrollment was small, with only 5 or 6 children, grades 1 to 8. So the pupils were transported to Fallbrook schools.

The Fallbrook Union Elementary School board brought the building up to code after a year or so, and then the school was used as a community center and became known as the De Luz Nature Study Center (later Ecology Center). Nature trails were laid out by the Forestry and Soil Conservation volunteers. Clarence Tedford's family put in a native garden in his memory. Programs, exhibits and films were used part of the time by directors hired to conduct the studies. At present, children from third grade and up are bused from Fallbrook to participate in the day camps, guided by a full-time teacher and assistant. Teachers, administrators, and parents accept this program enthusiastically.

Submitted by: *Theodora Garnsey*  
Mrs. Felix Garnsey

## De Luiz Ecology Center

### Who Has Taught at the Center?

1972/1973 Self-Guided program created by **Patrick Russell, Gale Hawk, Susan Shimmin**. Optional program directed by the classroom teacher utilizing a manual put together by the individuals listed above. All grades were invited to use the center. The System did not seem to work well as established. Most of the teachers stayed inside of the building with the students; they were weary of getting lost on the limited trails and were hesitant because of the population of snakes and the poison oak known to exist on the property.

1973/1974 **Mellouise Miller** was hired as the full-time to direct the program.

1974/1975 **Mellouise Miller** gets married! **Wayne Elder** takes over.

1975/1976 ? Wayne Elder

1976/1977 ?

1977/1978 March - June 1978 school used by local students due to the area being flooded (54 inches of rain). The students were not able to be transported to Fallbrook schools. **Gail Raser** (~~Cunningham?~~) was a local resident with a teaching credential and she became the one-room-schoolhouse teacher.

1978/1979 Center Closed

1979/1980 Candy Layton (She was a Teachers's Aid and former employee at the San Diego Zoo). She reopens the center as an hourly rate employee. Proposition 13 prohibited the hiring of a full time teacher to run the program.

1980/1981 ?

1981/1982 ?

1982/1983 Pilot "Conservation Program" run by **Gail Cunningham**. Short term program for sixth grade students. Sixty students visiting program for a five day visit (not overnight).

1983-1987 Jackie Judd developed programs that are still in use today

1987/1988 **Jackie Judd** passes away in November. **Scott Gordon**, who is a student teacher, is selected as a temporary replacement.

1988/1990 **Katy Duffin-Tobler**, who is a bilingual teacher, takes over the program.

1990/1991 **Katy Duffin-Tobler** moves to Northern California and is replaced by district teacher **Scott Gordon**

1991/1992 Scott Gordon continues the program at a 60% rate due to budget limitations. He finishes the year at La Paloma Elementary.

1992/1993 47 inches of rain once again closes the roads to Fallbrook. **Gail Cunningham** is back as a teacher to work with the students that live in De Luz.

1993/1994 Center closed.

1994-2019 **Scott Gordon** is back at the center.

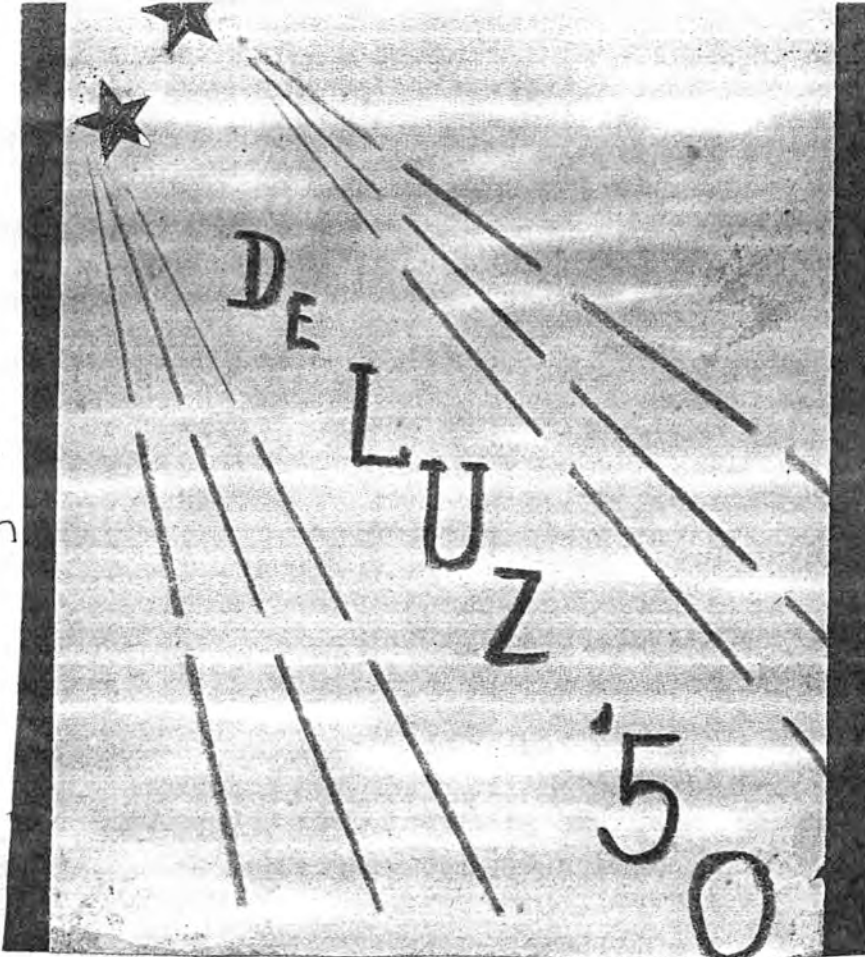
2019/2020 Program closes in March due to Covid-19. Fifth grade program is completed but the 4th grade Gold Rush Day is canceled.

2020/2021 Center closed due to Covid-19

2021/2022 Scott Gordon back at center  
one-room-schoolhouse day for third  
graders removed as well as third  
day for 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Two day  
"Survival Program" created for all  
6<sup>th</sup> grade classes

2022/2023 Scott Gordon

Steve's  
8th grade  
graduation



Flag  
Day

June 16  
1950

PROGRAM

1. Salute to the Flag  
America  
-- Led by Regis Kinnell
2. FLAG DAY -- Marilee Smith
3. MURDER FOR THE FLAG -- Lana Gill
4. Songs:
  - a) PATSY WONG
  - b) THE FLAG  
-- Cary Surls, Lana Gill, Freddie  
Morse, Wanda Surls
5. UP WITH THE BANNER -- Wanda Surls
6. THE AMERICAN FLAG  
-- Lee Surls, Gary Surls, Lana Gill,  
Judith Morse, Wanda Surls, Dwain  
Surls
7. Tonette Solo:  
BEAUTIFUL AMERICA -- Marilee Smith
8. WHEN COMES THE FLAG -- Larry Morse,  
Marie Surls, Judith Morse, Regis  
Kinnell
9. FOR MY COUNTRY -- Marie Surls
10. A SONG FOR OUR COUNTRY -- School
11. Graduation Speech  
OUR WORLD AT THE CROSS ROADS  
Stephen Carnsey
12. Presentation of Diploma  
Helen Green
13. ALOHA -- Marilee Smith with  
Audience on the Chorus
14. GOD BLESS AMERICA -- Audience  
God bless America, Land that I love!  
Stand beside her, and guide her  
With a light that is bright from above.  
From the mountains, to the prairies,  
To the ocean white with foam,  
God bless America, our home sweet home.  
God bless America, our home sweet home.

In January 1984 the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District piloted the De Luz Ecology Center Outdoor Environmental Education Program. The program is a four day non-resident outdoor education classroom located in a one room school house (circa 1927), surrounded by one-hundred twenty acres of chaparral, riparian and oak woodland environment. Concepts such as adaptations, food chains and webs, ecosystems, habitats, cycles in nature and wise use of natural resources are introduced to the sixth grade students. The above mentioned concepts are explored through optimum use of the environment surrounding the ecology center. Students collect and examine insects from the local stream, study the local geology and pan for gold, investigate plants in the chaparral environment and participate in many other environmental activities that take advantage of the location of the center.

Activities at the center are directed by one full time teacher and an aide. The teacher at the center provides a curriculum for classroom teachers. The curriculum includes concepts that are covered at the center as well as activities to use before students attend the four day program and after they return to their regular classroom. Besides using activities specific to the De Luz location the teacher at the center has also included Project Wild, Project Learning Tree, Class Project and OBIS into the (sixth) grade curriculum. Classroom teachers accompany students on the hikes and participate in teaching.

end The grounds and building are maintained by one custodian, but most of the trail work has been done by the California Conservation Corps and the California Department of Forestry. All of these man/woman hours were donated free of



# Students play Tom Sawyer and head for nature

By CHARLES MACKEY

Most of us can conjure up thoughts of how our grandparents might have gone to school. We imagine maybe a Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn, a frog in one pocket, a horned toad in another, a couple rabbit's feet for good luck and off they would go on foot or horseback to a small country schoolhouse.

It was a time when kids grew up with nature and learned about it first hand. Then it was the teacher's task to get the kids out of the trees and behind desks. Now, however, the feeling is that education has gained book knowledge but somewhere in the process lost touch with nature.

With this in mind, the Fallbrook Elementary School Board approved a full fledged program to begin this September to take its students out of the classrooms and put them in the environment they are studying.

Several years ago the DeLuz School District and its one-room schoolhouse was annexed to the Fallbrook district. The action brought the closing of the schoolhouse and its 130 acre grounds and the bussing of the DeLuz area youngsters here. The school and grounds became the property of the Fallbrook Elementary District.

It wasn't long before school officials realized they had a golden opportunity in the DeLuz site. A grant was obtained through the county's "Pilot Projects Fund," a fund originating through federal money given to San Diego County to develop innovative projects.

The main goal of the project,

according to Gene Bedley, Director of Instruction, is to teach the youngsters to conserve and appreciate their environment. This will be done by having an individual teacher, with the help of at least one adult supervisor, take his or her students to the DeLuz site for a particular area of study.

Say the study will include the flowers of the areas. The teacher might begin by showing the students a selection from more than 150 color slides of flowers which grow in the area. The slides, taken over the past 39 years were donated and identified by Mr. and Mrs. Felix Garnsey.

Following the slide showing in the Danny McManus exhibit hall, the students could then hike through the 130 acres looking for flowers to identify them.

A guide, prepared during the early part of the summer, will be used to lead the instructor through a particular activity at the site. The guide begins with "careful" signs which all students and teachers should follow. There is a detailed drawing of a rattlesnake and a procedure to follow should one be encountered. Also word of caution is given on poison oak and other skin irritating plants.

Probably the one feature which will be most used is the nature trail which is cut through the 130 acres in a manner not to disrupt the natural surroundings. The trail was begun through the efforts of Jean Binder, chairman of a subcommittee of the Area Wide Outdoor Education Committee.

Jean started by contacting Frank Fairchild, the North

Coast Director of State Parks, who came to the site and surveyed the area. He then assigned two men to work with members of the Sierra Club in staking-out and cutting the trail. Members of Fallbrook Boy Scout Troup 723 also worked on the job.

The main effort in making the trail was to preserve the natural features of the land. The work, all done by hand or with hand tools, left many tunnels through the brush as the trail snakes along.

A guide is also being prepared which will point out interesting features along the trail, such as trees and land terrain.

To aid in the study of insects and plant life, a bioscope and two tape cassette recorders were donated by the Board of Directors of the Soil Conservation Service of Fallbrook. The

bioscope can enlarge a small insect and throw a picture of it on a screen to viewed by a class.

This equipment, along with the slides given by the Garnsey's will be permanently kept at the Danny McManus Exhibit Hall for use when a group is at the site.

Another aspect of the program will be visits to the DeLuz Forest Fire Station to instruct the youngsters in prevention of forest fires and the techniques used to fight one.

The tours will learn some of the features involving the weather and a basic survival course including knowledge of edible foods found in the area.

Bedley, who has been coordinating the project, said the project, though already defined, will have plenty of room for expansion. In fact it can go about as far-out as nature.

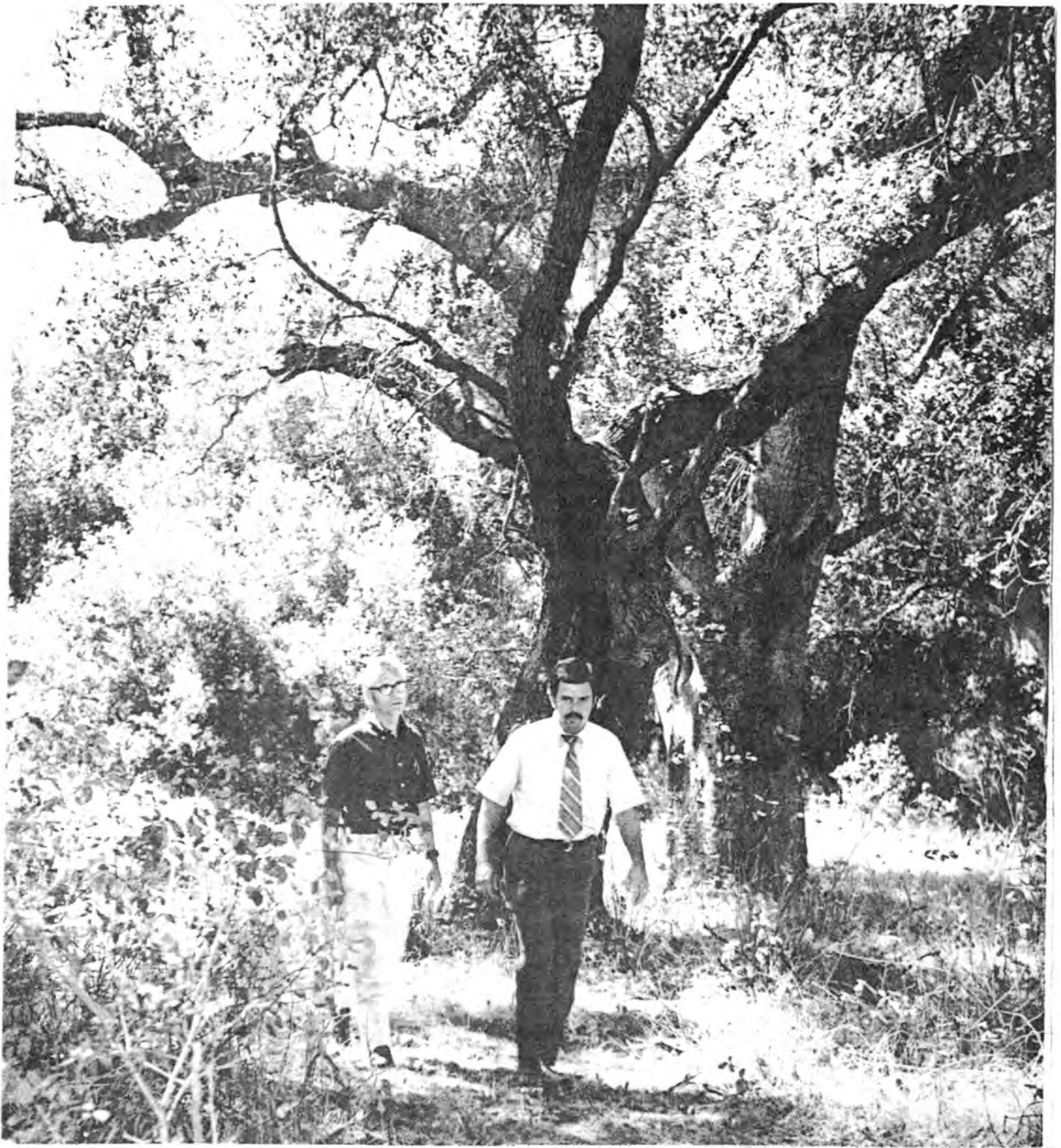
## 'Nature school' has Open House Monday

An open house to introduce residents of the community to the new outdoor educational program at the DeLuz school will be held Monday, Sept. 11, from noon to 5 p.m.

The program, to be available to all students of the Fallbrook Elementary School District, is aimed to teach youngsters to conserve and appreciate the environment.

The DeLuz school is located about ten miles out on DeLuz Road. Transportation will be provided for those who do not have their own way by telephoning the Curriculum Resource Center at the Elementary School (728-1131).





**OLD LIVE OAK DWARFS  
MARVIN VAN HOUTEN AND  
GENE BEDLEY**

## OLD DE LUZ SCHOOL, TRAIL

# Pupils Use Ecology Center

By BILL DOYLE  
Staff Writer, The San Diego Union

DE LUZ — Many school districts talk of establishing an ecology program but Fallbrook Elementary has done it.

Their program is one that has gone beyond teaching nature study and preservation of the environment.

The core of the program is focused on the new ecology center, opened last fall in the old De Luz schoolhouse, 14 miles from Fallbrook in the middle of De Luz Canyon.

Constructed in 1927, the one-room schoolhouse became expendable four years ago when the Fallbrook Elementary School District took over its operation and began bussing students to town.

The twofold ecology program has displays inside the old school building and a nature study trail where students can observe living exhibits.

Displays include unusual rocks, leaves, old maps, slides, pictures and other items that tell the history of the area and the type of vegetation, animal life, geological and unusual items found there.

### Plants, Rocks, Fallen Tree

Along the trail, markers show plant growth, animal watering locations, rock formations and such features as a fallen tree that has a young sapling growing from its roots.

Each of the five schools in the district are assigned a week in rotation and classes are bussed to the center to study nature first hand.

Much of the credit for the center goes to Mr. and Mrs. Pat Rusnell, both teachers in the elementary district.

Together with members of the Sierra Club, Boy Scout groups and other interested citizens, the Rusnells spent most

of last summer preparing the old school site for its new role.

The Rusnells, along with Mrs. S. Schmin, a teacher at Mary Fay Pendleton School, an district librarian, Mrs. Frances Knox, have written a study guide that is on file at each school. Teachers use it to help introduce the subject.

Each of the 20 stops on the quarter-mile study trail at the center is marked and each corresponds with the study guide so the teacher can conduct the tour.

Frank Fairchild, chief state park ranger, and two of his assistants helped lay out the original trail and are planning a second.

### Slide Projector, Teaching Aids

Members of the Fallbrook Environmental Ecology Council donated many of the exhibits put on tables inside the old schoolroom. A slide projector and other teaching aids are stored in a locked cupboard and chairs are set up in rows to allow a speaker to make his presentation.

Mrs. Rusnell estimates that, other than the school building, cost of the entire project did not exceed \$1,000. The old school also is used as a community center.

"We want the students to have a love for the area and see how nature takes care of itself. The students can see how brush reseeds itself after a fire and have love of nature," Mrs. Rusnell said.

Although the center during the first year has been restricted to schools in the Fallbrook district, requests from other schools have been received.

"One of the things I'd like to see is a full-time person hired to operate the center," Mrs. Rusnell added. "It would allow more people the opportunity to use the facilities and enjoy nature."



Students in the Fallbrook Elementary School District have begun a program of spending a day seeing displays and nature paths at the dis-

trict's ecology center. Mrs. Pat Rusnell shows items on a display table to Kelly McClintock, 9, Tim McKnight, 9, and Brad Forsyth, 8.



Fallbrook teacher Mrs. Pat Rusnell points out a fallen log to five La Paloma students visiting the Fallbrook Ecology Center at the old De

Luz School. From left, Brad Forsyth, Tim McKnight, Kelly McClintock, Mrs. Rusnell, student guide, Ellen Athay and Maurice Cosio.

# ENVIRONMENTAL



# NEWS & VIEWS

## SAN DIEGO COUNTY

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APRIL - 1973

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(Union 2-4-73)

# DeLuz Nature Center in full operation

To make students aware of the beauty and importance of natural areas is the primary goal of the DeLuz Nature Study Center. The DeLuz Center was once a one room school house used by the children of DeLuz.

After last year's pilot program in outdoor education, the Center is now in full operation providing a learning experience for the children of the district. It is rapidly becoming a favorite field trip of the children who appreciate the opportunity to enjoy nature firsthand in its natural setting and beauty.

When the children first arrive at the center they are met by Mellouise Miller, coordinator for the DeLuz center, for a short orientation inside the school house. Miss Miller, a biologist and graduate of United States International University, was employed by the school district this fall to organize and expand the

program of outdoor education.

After the classroom orientation the children are taken in groups onto the nature trail that winds through the trees, meadows and chaparral around the center. This trail was surveyed and constructed by California State Park Ranger trainees and volunteers from the Sierra Club.

Miss Miller reported:

"The Center is especially grateful to the friends and relatives of Harry D Garnsey for the establishment of a memorial fund in his name, to be used for the purchase of program material for the outdoor education of the children visiting the Center. It is through the contributions of volunteers and friends of the Center that have helped make it such a worthwhile program.

"The Center is always ready to accept donations of materials such as rocks and minerals, slides of wildlife, display cases, and any other items that would enhance the program."

Anyone who would like to donate material may contact Mellouise Miller through the Fallbrook Union School District office.

Thursday, Dec. 13, 1973

The Fallbrook Enterprise



STUDENTS get a first-hand look at the size of a Coastal Live Oak, growing at the DeLuz Center, by trying to reach around its trunk. This is the largest Live Oak at the Nature Center.



CHILDREN visiting the DeLuz Nature Center sample some Chia seeds. Chia is just one of the many interesting native plants they learn about while visiting the DeLuz Nature Center.

## Training program <sup>12/13</sup> for DeLuz project set

An "on-the-trail" training program for adult volunteers for the Fallbrook St. Elementary School De Luz Ecology project will be held Wednesday, Jan. 24 from 2 to 5 p.m.

Volunteers may meet at the Ecology Center in De Luz at 2:30, or at Fallbrook St. School at 2 p.m. to form car caravans. There will be no climbing or

strenuous walking, but walking shoes are advised for the quarter mile trek.

Frank Fairchild, area ranger for the Southern California coastal parks, will direct the program and teach the volunteers about the area which they will in turn, teach to the Fallbrook students.



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1973/1974



# Exhibit hall renamed for Danny McManus

In honor of a DeLuz boy who loved the natural surroundings where he lived, the DeLuz schoolhouse has been renamed the Danny McManus Hall.

This exhibit hall will be used as

Thursday, Sept. 7, 1972



Daniel Brian McManus  
1957 - 1972

the hub of a nature study program to be begun this September by the Fallbrook Elementary School District at the DeLuz school.

Danny, 14, died in a shooting accident March 23, 1972. Below is the eulogy written by Danny's mother, Mrs. James McManus, which will appear in the guide to

the program.

Thirteen of Danny's 14 and one-half years were lived in De Luz. This was the out-of-doors that he loved.

Danny was happiest when he was jumping from rock to rock in De Luz creek, climbing the hills around his home or swinging from near the top of a Sycamore tree on a one-rope swing.

It was natural that this healthy boy saw all this beautiful valley as a sacred creation and he loved it. "Dere's my friend de calipitter" he said to his mother as a tiny boy pointing to a fuzzy caterpillar on their front walk. The harmless snake was more to be held and studied than killed. The spring fed stream behind the McManus house was filled with meaningful life and it was not uncommon to see Danny as a little boy carrying a live crayfish to show his daddy.

Danny spent his first four school years in the little one-room De Luz school house. He was gifted in art expressions and seemed at his best drawing trees and detailing the textures of bark and rocks. He wanted to be an archeologist. The relics of Indian life in the valley were of the greatest interest to him; in a search for arrowheads, Danny would be the first to spot the warm color of flint.

This young, gentle red-headed boy was too soon taken out of his beloved out-of-doors and from his family and friends; but that is our human interpretation. Surely, God who put into Danny's heart and soul all his love for nature also knew when he was best fitted to roam the hills of heaven.

# Fallbrook Students Go Back To

By SAUL SHAPIRO  
Staff Writer

DE LUZ — Far from the madding crowd, beyond nearly all remnants of civilization, is the Fallbrook Union School District's De Luz Nature Trail.

On the winding De Luz Road, twelve miles north of Fallbrook, the De Luz Nature Trail is a retreat from the daily grind of the school day where students — and teachers — can learn about nature firsthand.

The nature trail headquarters is the old one-room De Luz schoolhouse built in 1927 and abandoned six years ago when only seven students attended.

There were various recommendations for the school district to utilize the school facilities and the relatively undisturbed grounds around it for a

nature study area. This year something was done about it.

The district hired Melouise Miller, a born and bred Fallbrookian who had specialized in wildlife biology at United States International University, to direct and coordinate the school activities in De Luz.

Miss Miller has made the place into a museum with displays on rocks, plants, and wildlife found in the area exhibited throughout the schoolhouse. Much of the material is from her own personal collections, gathered while growing up in Fallbrook.

In addition to the material featured at the schoolhouse, Miss Miller conducts a guided tour and a slide show for visiting classes. An average of three classes per week will spend three hours at the De Luz site.

Teachers had been somewhat reluctant about venturing out to desolate De Luz before, but Melouise now makes them feel at home.

"Some would come out here last year and go out on the trail. They would take the tour with a push button cassette tape explaining different stops along the trail. But a lot of

teachers didn't come out here because they were scared of snakes. I think the two pages devoted to snake bites in the tour book had something to do with that.

"But now they come out here and they are delighted. The kids really enjoy it, too. I see them in town and they'll ask me how everything is out

## Nature At De Luz

here.

"One of the problems we have," Melouise says, "is that they want to take everything they see. We have to tell them these things have to be left for other people to see."

On Tuesday, Melouise Miller was telling Margaret Brereton's fourth grade class from the Mary Fay Pendleton Elementary School about some of the background of the school area — about how Indians were mysteriously immune to poison oak, possibly because they cooked and ate it; and how the Indians ate white sage mint to keep their mouths moist when water wasn't available.

She told the students about chaparral, its uses and its oil content

which made it flammable, and the pack rat, a mischievous little thief who clutters up its own house with stolen "goods."

But, most of all, Miss Miller emphasized how to act in a wilderness area and an appreciation of nature.

"With more and more leisure time available, people have to learn how to use it," Mrs. Brereton, who has a background in wildlife studies, said.

"It's an invaluable hobby," Melouise Miller added. "It's something you only need your eyes and ears for as well as a field book. A child can't see in the classroom what he can see in this environment. It's a learning experience as well as being enjoyable."



DE LUZ NATURE TRAIL plant life is explained to school children by Melouise Miller. (Laurie Monax photo).

# Nature Center instructor awaits first students

by BRUCE FAHLEN

Wayne Elder, 25, is a Long Beach State graduate in recreation who decided that working in DeLuz on his father's avocado grove might be the better alternative to a dwindling teaching market.

As all the polls had demonstrated, using one's teaching credential on anything but teaching is usually the fate of the recent college graduate.

For Elder, the situation had been identical to those who had followed him; the teaching job market could almost be considered closed.

All that changed last month when Mellouise Miller, the local director of the DeLuz Nature Study Center, decided

that matrimony would be the better alternative, and Elder, taking advantage of an obvious opportunity, accepted the position that same month. He awaits his first group of students next week.

Reaction by Elder to his selection as nature study director was marked by surprise, though he had been contacted some months ago by district superintendant William Frazier concerning Ms. Miller's marriage plans.

"Mr. Frazier and I both knew that Mellouise would be getting married," Wayne recalled, "but neither of us were sure as to when the date of her resignation would be. Happening as soon as it did was really a sur-

prise."

Elder had been travelling extensively since his graduation from Long Beach State in 1972. He toured Europe and had been living at Lake Tahoe and Long Beach during the time he first communicated with Frazier.

"I first applied for the Nature Center job a year ago," he explained. "I came down from Lake Tahoe for an interview with Mr. Frazier about the same time that she revealed her marriage plans."

The Deluz Schoolhouse was built in 1927, to replace another nearby school site for DeLuz which had been used since 1882. The 1927 building which did not meet earthquake standards, was abandoned when the standards were being enforced in the early 1970's; other factors were also involved which influenced the DeLuz School Board's decision to vacate.

The Fallbrook Union School District rebuilt the building to meet earthquake-proof standards of the 1933 Field Act; establishing the nature center.

Since that time, the district has invited schools throughout San Diego County to make use of the center, although the local schools have top priority for its use.

"What we do out here is to

show the kids something about early Indian life in the area and explain to them what foods they ate," said Elder. "We also tell them about the various foods that can be eaten in the wild, and those that can't be."

Actually, Elder is only the second full time director at the center. Ms. Miller was employed full time after the district found that allowing classroom teachers to lead the field trips was not working out.

Explained Elder:

"What happened was that whenever a class of students would come out to the center, their regular teacher would also serve as the program guide. This didn't work out

because most of the teachers usually stayed within the building itself, because they were afraid of getting lost. Now it's a totally cooperative situation. I visit the individual schools and ask the teachers when they would like to send out a class. This is really the best way of working it."

Time and class size is a problem that Elder has yet to work out. Often, field trips will involve from 15 to 35 students, and a full period of nature study is only three hours in length, including lunch.

"I pretty much have to live with the time limit," he said, "however much I'd like it to be increased. Three hours really isn't much time. As far as the students themselves go, I find that the younger ones are the easiest to handle, regardless of class size. They seem to be fascinated by the newness of everything. You have to be on your toes all the time with the older ones, though. I have to watch them pretty closely."

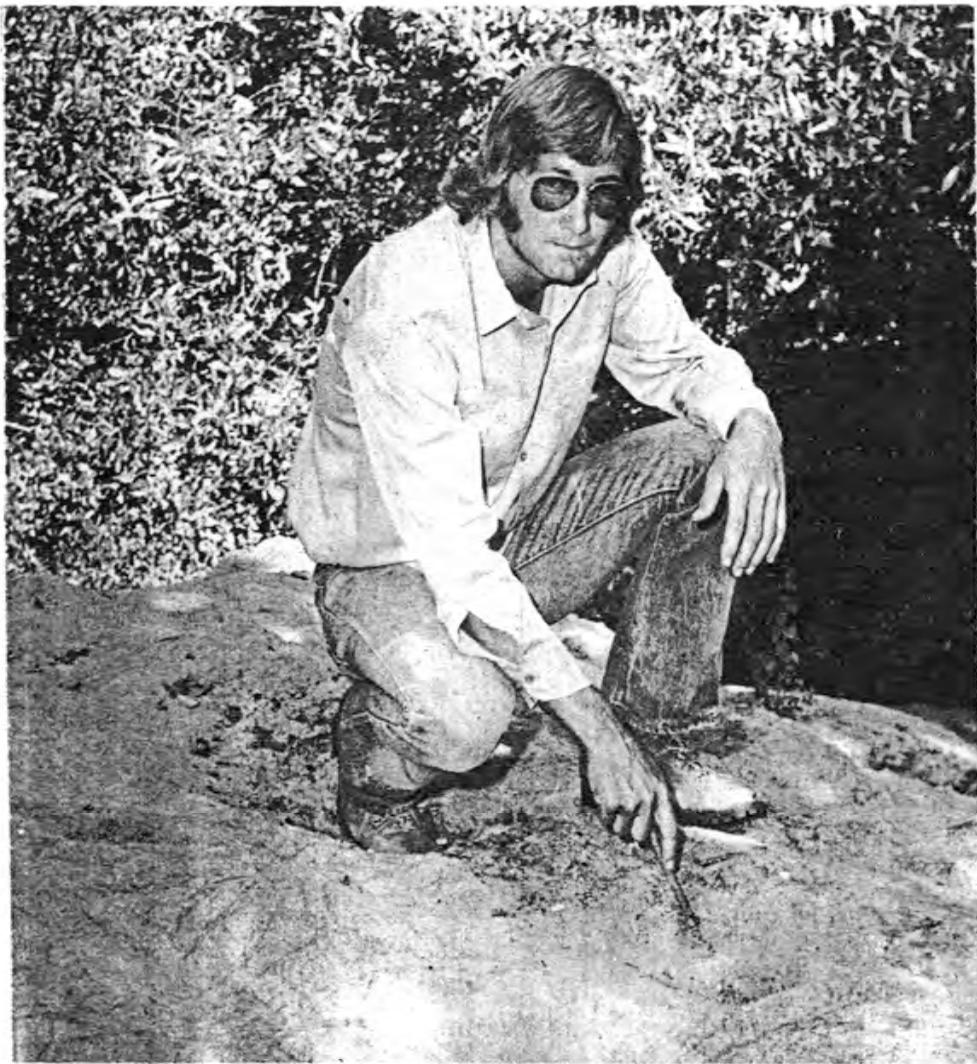
Elder worked at the Lakewood Recreation Center in Long Beach and then at the Eldorado Nature Center, while attending college. But the DeLuz position will be his first full time teaching job.

"The Eldorado Center is situated in Long Beach," he said, "and it's only 80 acres. The DeLuz center is about 130 acres."

The abruptness of Elder's selection has left him with little time to develop his own ideas concerning the goals of the center. For the time being, he plans to continue with Ms. Miller's innovations until later in the year.

"Right now I'm just trying to get my feet on the ground and get situated," he explained. "I probably won't attempt to develop anything new for a while. But I would like to do more with the stream that flows near the center. I want to take more field study courses in that area."

Elder is striving for a variety in course structure at the school. He still considers the school's primary duty as one involving the protection and maintenance of the environment in its natural state. Children, he believes, are rarely given an opportunity to see nature as it really is, rather than as it was made to be.



NATURE STUDY - Wayne Elder, the new director of the Deluz Nature Center, plans to further develop this nature trail on the 130 acre center. The area encompasses a stream and an early Indian food processing area.

—Bruce Fahlen photos



BIOSCOPE — Nature Center Director Wayne Elder exhibits device that magnifies plant life and stream samples used during classroom demonstrations at the center. Elder was employed by the district after past director Mellouise Miller resigned.

P O BOX 454  
WALNUT CA 91789

# THE ENTERPRISE

Fallbrook

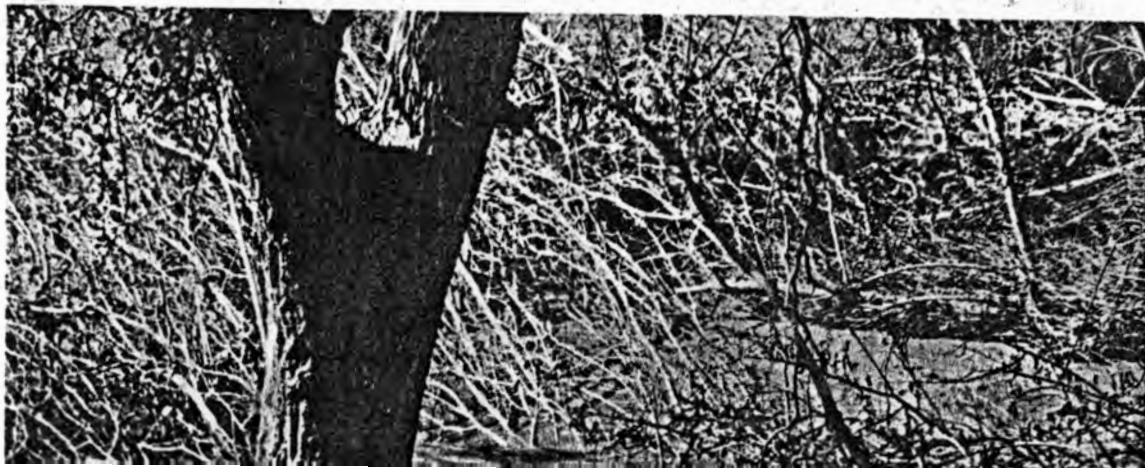
California

Covering The Avocado and Citrus Empire of Northern San Diego and Southern Riverside Counties

15¢ Per Copy

Thursday, March 9, 1978

## Scary road triggers DeLuz School opening



Based on the dangerous condition of roads in the DeLuz area as reported by residents Monday night, the Fallbrook elementary school board has re-opened DeLuz School.

The school which was converted to a combination community center and nature education center when closed to classes about 15 years ago, will be again used to house approximately 30 DeLuz students on a temporary basis.

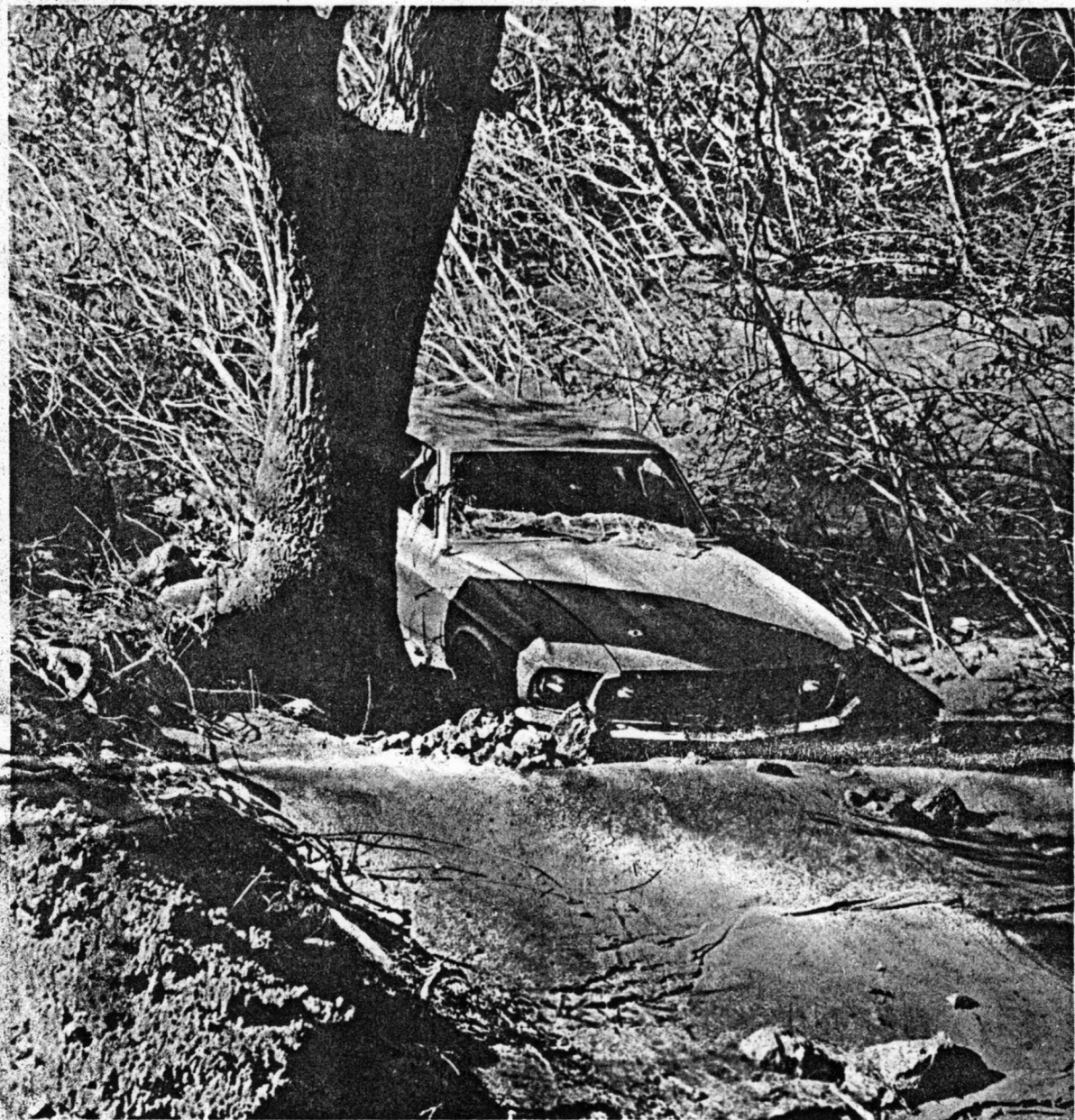
At Monday night's school board meeting held at Potter Junior High School, it was

suggested the district make use of certificated personnel who live in DeLuz to hold school as needed for kindergarten through eighth grade. Murphy suggested however that seventh and eighth graders should attend the junior high school here if

at all possible.

Charles Key, spokesman for the DeLuz parents, informed the board that DeLuz has become very dangerous and said that there are impassable locations in addition to the Santa Mary River.

Would you



Mike Valente photo

**CRUNCHED** — One of a number of cars that succumbed to flood conditions during the repeated storms that hit the Fallbrook area was found up against a tree in the Santa Margarita Riverbed on

Monday. Whether it went off the road due to slick mud or went off at the Sandia crossing has not been recorded.

# ad triggers school opening



Mike Valente photo  
the road due to slick  
Sandia crossing has not

Based on the dangerous condition of roads in the DeLuz area as reported by residents Monday night, the Fallbrook elementary school board has re-opened DeLuz School.

The school which was converted to a combination community center and nature education center when closed to classes about 15 years ago, will be again used to house approximately 30 DeLuz students on a temporary basis.

At Monday night's school board meeting held at Potter Junior High School, it was noted that trustees had been approached to re-open the DeLuz School on an emergency basis due to the flooding and washouts which are making it difficult to run a school bus between there and Fallbrook.

Supt. Robert Murphy

## Fallbrook rain total hits 32.77

With the arrival of this month's series of rains, Fallbrook's total came to 32.77 inches; more than one inch ahead of the 1915-16 season rainfall of 31.61.

This means that the current total for Fallbrook is the third highest rainfall in 100 years. The 1977-78 winter rainfall is exceeded only by season totals of 40.25 in 1883-84 and 36.35 in 1906-07.

March 1	2.71
March 2	1.40
March 3	.42
March 4	.32
March 5	1.46
March 6	.03
March total to date	6.34
Season total to date	32.77
Last year this time	10.17

Readings taken by  
Fallbrook Citrus Association.

suggested the district make use of certificated personnel who live in DeLuz to hold school as needed for kindergarten through eighth grade. Murphy suggested however that seventh and eighth graders should attend the junior high school here if

at all possible. Charles Key, spokesman for the DeLuz parents, informed the board that DeLuz Road has become very dangerous and said that there are many impassable locations in addition to the Santa Margarita River.

The critical location on DeLuz Rd. which Key felt is dangerous to the school bus (as well as other vehicles) is about three miles north of Fallbrook on a curve which is undermined by an un-

(Please turn to Page A-18)

## Would you believe creek at 14 feet?

Flood stories are beginning to trickle out of the DeLuz area.

The most amazing but true account concerns the recent flash flood that caused DeLuz Creek to turn into a raging torrent that crested at 14 feet.

Residents Charles Key and Jan Metzger (and others) agree on the 14-foot figure. The flood took out a footbridge that spanned the creek at 14-feet on the Larry Butler ranch.

At the eight-mile mark Wes Elder had his Jeep parked on high ground alongside the creek but he told neighbors it rose like a monster and the Jeep is nowhere to be found.

Peggy Durling reported that the dam broke at the Kiwi Ranch on Saturday and a lot of water took an oak tree, caused a power outage and was en-

dangering a house.

On Sunday a helicopter took Richard Matthews, in his 70's to Fallbrook Air Park for transportation to Fallbrook Hospital. It was found he was suffering only chest pains and Matthews was reported as released this week.

The cement slab at DeLuz Creek at the "Y" between the McManus place and Felix Garnsey's was reported as being washed out. The McManus footbridge was being utilized and on Monday groceries were brought across on a pulley.

Mrs. Metzger said her house has been flooded with mud for the second time (Jan. 16 and March 1) because private agricultural roads above the house "built on debris" have broken away. She said the canyon was now in four sections.

It was also reported but not

confirmed that the county is planning a temporary bridge to span DeLuz Creek.

Lorraine Jarnot, a teller at Mutual Savings and Loan, Fallbrook, said she came across the Santa Margarita River near Sandia Creek by rowboat Monday morning to get to work.

The Jarnot place on Via Ranchitos near Gavilan Mtn. Rd. along with a number of neighbors have been isolated six days, from Tuesday night (Feb. 28) until Monday morning.

She said neighbors finally cooperated to get a boat rigged up and that one youth swam across a swollen stream to some trees with a towline.

Ms. Jarnot came to Fallbrook in her old clothes and changed into good attire for her office work.

# Scary road

(Continued from page A-1)

derground creek located at a 200 foot drop in the canyon.

Key said this location is not even safe for a 4-wheel drive vehicle and definitely unsafe for a school bus. (He explained in a brief interview after the meeting that the road was half gone at the location of the 200 foot drop and Key added he didn't feel safe just standing on the road at that point.)

Key told the board that the county filled and widened the road one or two years ago, but no culverts were put in and there appeared to be no compacting.

Trustee Marianne Vance spoke up at this point, informing the board that she had called the county road department and they told her there would probably be no repair of DeLuz Rd. before July.

Key said there would have been more DeLuz parents at the school board meeting but most of his neighbors were at a meeting elsewhere in Fallbrook (at Maie Ellis Cafetorium) in an effort to get emergency funds. The DeLuz people apparently had taken advantage of a couple of days of dry weather to escape isolation and cross over to Fallbrook.

Supt. Murphy said the teacher who would be operating the DeLuz School during the emergency could obtain individual assignments from teachers in Fallbrook. He added this would be done Tuesday (March 7) so that classes could possibly start in DeLuz on Wednesday (March 8).

Mrs. Rebecca Daze, trustee, said there would probably be a lot of volunteer help from parents. "They can't go anywhere anyway,"

Mrs. Daze said.

Murphy reiterated he would prefer to have junior high students here, but they could be handled out in DeLuz if necessary.

There was some talk among board members that junior high students could stay with friends or relatives on the Fallbrook side, but one parent told of youngsters who crossed the "aerial tram" Sunday to get home again.

It was noted by DeLuz parents that many roads are flooded in that area and that in many cases students have been unable to get far enough to reach the school bus. Some had been staying home from school due to bad weather for two or three weeks.

Parents insisted the school bus from Fallbrook be prevented from using DeLuz Rd. despite the fact they understood the road had been "approved" after inspection by the school district's transportation department on Monday.

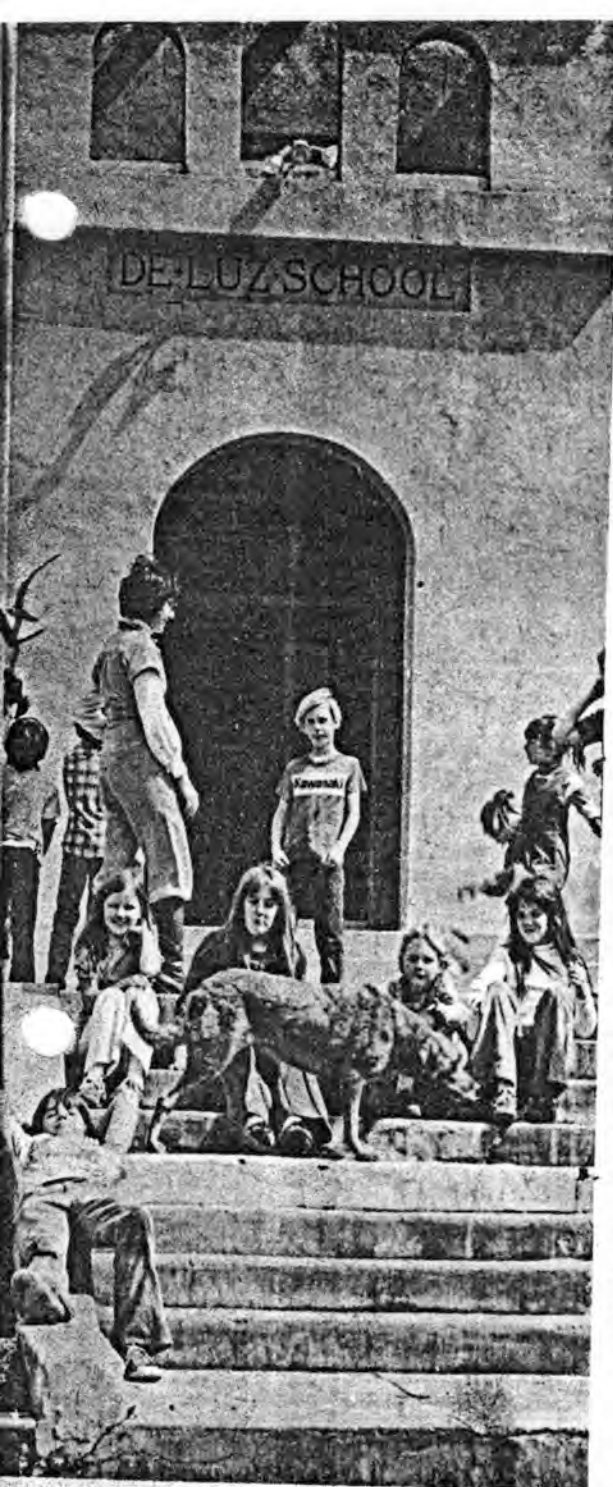
The board decision to utilize DeLuz School for the emergency was unanimous. Classes began yesterday (March 8).

The Enterprise contacted Principal Henry Woessner at the high school on Tuesday and was assured that all high school students in the DeLuz area can be reached by bus with only four exceptions.

Woessner said four students are completely cut off in the Rock Mountain-Gavilan-Sandia Creek area and he added they had been unable to attend school for a couple of weeks.

He was checking again Tuesday to see if they are getting their homework assignments.

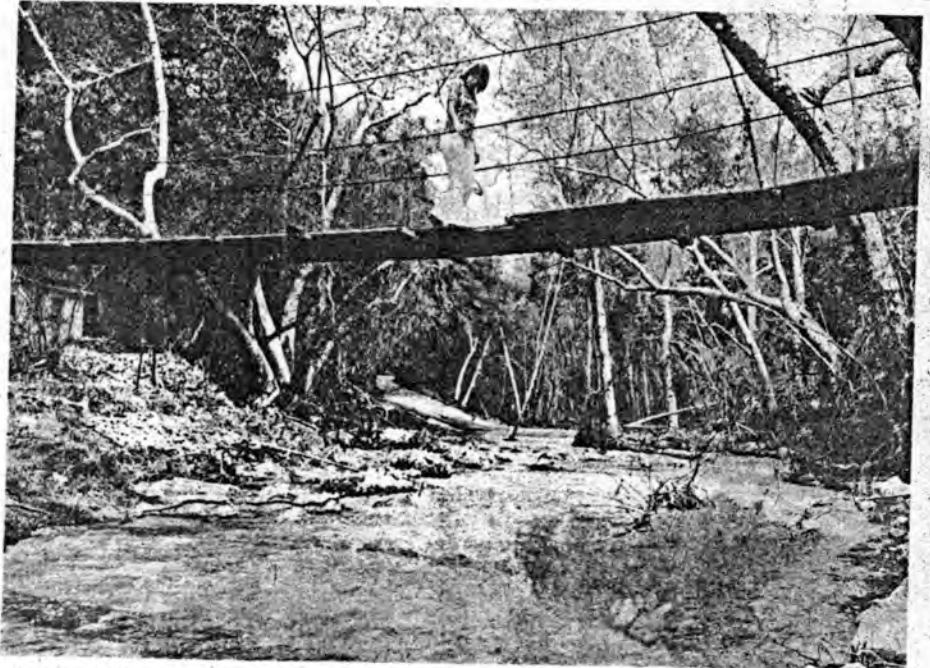




**NOW OPEN** — Some 21 students from the DeLuz area are attending class in the old DeLuz Schoolhouse this week and most of last week as the school was reopened to accommodate students cut off from Fallbrook by flooding. The students, ranging from kindergarten through sixth grades, will attend the one room school until a decision is made by the Fallbrook Elementary School board of trustees to close the school and bus the students to Fallbrook. Action is expected next Monday evening at the meeting of trustees. Gail Raser, a DeLuz resident and a member of the elementary district, is teaching the class with help from parent-volunteers including Peggy Durling, Pat Raley, Lois Cunningham and Sue Welburn.



**UNDERMINED** — A small ranch house on the Claude Sweet property in DeLuz was undermined when a small stream became greatly enlarged and washed away part of the house's foundation. Although the structure sagged on one side the house is still being lived in.



**ON FOOT** — DeLuz resident Pat Raley crosses the DeLuz Creek on one of two foot bridges which was operational during recent flooding. When the vehicle bridge washed-out the foot bridges became the only way to cross the swollen river.





**NEW CROSSING** — Only cars and light pickups are being allowed to cross DeLuz Creek on the new steel bridge put in place by the department of transportation last week. The structure was being used temporarily until the water in the river lowers and a permanent bridge can be built to replace the one washed out two weeks ago.



**RESTING** — DeLuz rancher Felix Garnsey takes a breather beside a culvert he had to shore up recently with sand in plastic garbage bags to stop water from washing out the culvert. Garnsey found that using plastic to cover loose soil greatly restricted the water's cutting edge.



**TEMPORARY SOLUTION** — Deluz area residents pitch in with sand bags to shore up the cement foundation supporting a new steel bridge which will temporarily allow vehicle crossing of the Deluz Creek. The bridge was put into place last week by the county department of transportation. The old

bridge was discovered washed out a week earlier as the swollen stream recessed sufficiently to expose the damage. According to a county spokesman the temporary bridge will be replaced by a permanent structure when the water in the creek allows the work to be done.

SCHOOL REOPENS TEMPORARILY

# Isolation Of De Luz Worsens As Floods Wash Out Roads

By NEIL BALL

Staff Writer, The San Diego Union



— Staff Photos by Roger Wrenn

Children from isolated De Luz, a far North County community hit hard by recent flooding, are having classes in the former De Luz School, now an ecology center. The school bus route into Fallbrook is too rough to travel.

DE LUZ — Even if you make it over a washed-out road, a temporary bridge and a dangerous De Luz Creek ford, the community of De Luz, about 12 miles north of Fallbrook, is difficult to find.

There is no wide road spot. No post office. No library. No drugstore. No newspaper. No coffee shop. Not even a gas station.

All there is here is a campground with a tiny market, some of the finest scenery in America, 331 people and many more avocado trees, and a one-room school.

Because floodwaters from the Santa Margarita River and its tributaries have torn up the countryside, the school is open again for 25 students.

That is five times as many as it had when De Luz School District closed it June 30, 1968, and merged the district — by default, because there were not a legal number of students — into Fallbrook Union School District.

Twenty-two of them, youngsters in kindergarten through sixth grade, were in school yesterday.

### 'Seem To Like It'

"They all seem to like it here," said their teacher, Gail Raser.

Raser normally operates the schoolhouse here as an ecology center for the school district which buses children from Fallbrook for the special classes. Now the buses have trouble getting here and the students who live in this area can't get to Fallbrook for school.

"We asked the trustees to open it up," said Lois Cunningham, a De Luz parent. "Some children couldn't get across the road. You can get around now. They've put dirt in the holes. But the roads are so narrow and there are construction trucks all over. I don't even like to drive around here now."

Cunningham said her 10-year-old son Danny was upset upon learning he would have to attend school here until De Luz Road is repaired and the bus could again take him safely to Maie Ellis School in Fallbrook.

"He came screaming and fighting and insisted on calling his teacher to make sure they saved his desk," she said. "Now he loves it here."

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De Luz Creek, usually a trickle, roars across De Luz-Murrieta Road near De Luz School. It is fordable in

trucks but usable road soon ends in more washouts in San Diego and Riverside counties.

ries — and partly just the one-room school.

The pleasant tan building, which looks like a Spanish mission, seemed to bask in the sunshine. Outside, there are white garages, a play area, picnic tables, basketball courts and a fountain surrounded by water lilies.

Three smiling girls came out the school door, down the steps, and headed for the picnic tables to share their sack lunches.

"There's no coffee shop around here," Raser said.

But there is a garden of native plants behind the school where even native Californians can learn something.

Carolyn Fox, who lives next to the school, sat down in her car, which she parks on the school grounds, and put on her socks and shoes.

"I have to wade across School Creek to get here from my house," she explained. "Anyhow, it's a creek

northeast to Murrieta never was very good.

It's washed out now, first at the creek below the "Dip" sign 200 yards from the school, and at many other places farther along.

A few miles north of the school are a campground and the De Luz Market. To get there now, one has to cross a temporary bridge of oil cans, corrugated steel and metal grids.

"Not too many people go there now," said Cunningham, "but you should see the campers on a Friday night in the summer."

#### Was Stagecoach Stop

South of the school off De Luz Road is an attractive colonial-style building, a former hotel and stagecoach stop built in 1881. It is owned by Barbara McManus who, residents say, holds religious retreats there.

Next to it is an old shed that once

heard of De Luz, or even Fallbrook," said Robert Murphy, superintendent of Fallbrook Union School District. "I was serving in the Marines on Guadalcanal when my parents wrote me they came to this area and saw it. They also said they were trapped across the river eight hours by a flood."

Murphy said school buses are able to get over most roads now.

"We have one driver, Ollie Crabtree, who wades a creek from her home on Daily Road to get to the bus and take some children to De Luz School and some into Fallbrook," Murphy said. "Her husband, Otis, is the De Luz School maintenance man. We're getting the junior high students into town — but we may let the De Luz School keep operating until after spring vacation."

#### Painting Taken At Gallery

A Leroy Neiman painting titled "Smash" and valued at \$1,000, was

# House Is Community Effort

By WARREN SWIL  
Staff Writer

DE LUZ — For more than 10 years the one-room schoolhouse in this isolated community has seen little use.

Closed in 1968 when parents asked the Fallbrook School District to enroll their children, the building has since 1974 been used only for ecology classes for students from Fallbrook.

Now the sounds of children at work and at play again can be heard in the diminutive school. Heavy rains, which made the 11-mile road to town dangerous and at times impassable, led to the reopening of the school earlier this month.

"Normally a bus would bring out one class each day," says Gail Raser, the ecology and biology teacher stationed permanently at the school. "I would give them a science lesson and take them on hikes."

Now Raser has 15 students aged from five to 12 who are attending the school full-time until the end of the semester. At the request of a group of parents who worried about their children traveling the still-hazardous road to Fallbrook every day, the school board decided to keep the De Luz school open until the end of the current semester.

It's an idyllic situation which could not be duplicated in schools in any city or town. Surrounded by 125 acres of grass, trees and bushes — now an emerald green from the rains — the small schoolhouse is like a relic from the last century. Only the solar heating system on the roof reminds one that it is indeed

a 20th century school.

A small creek, usually dry, now ripples past the building, providing a soothing background sound as the students sit quietly in class listening to their teacher. Only the sound of an occasional automobile disturbs the rustic stillness.

During the height of the rains, 22 students from the area were accommodated at the one-room school. Since then, some have returned to their regular schools in Fallbrook. "I find it's working a lot better with fewer students," Raser said.

"Teaching 22 students with all those grades was pretty tough, especially since they were all working on their own individual programs."

With the aid of five parent volunteers from the community, Raser is now teaching all the grades in the one room. "The parent-volunteer spends most of her time with the kindergarteners because they need so much attention," she said.

Science and social studies are taught to all the students in a group, with the older students helping the younger ones. "But we are mainly concentrating on the basics in math and reading," Raser said. "This is what the students need most."

The novelty of their new surroundings has had a good effect on the students, says their teacher. "They have been remarkably congenial with each other," she said. "The older ones enjoy helping the younger ones, and they even play together at lunch time."

According to one of the parent-volunteers, Sue Welburn, who was helping at the school this week, the environment is good for the students. "It develops a lot more independence in the children," she said. "They have to learn to challenge themselves because they don't have a group to work with. But they do get more individual attention from the teacher because the class is smaller."

Raser says the pressure on her to perform better as a teacher is unique because the De Luz community, where she has lived for about two years, is small and close. "When you know the parents and they know you, the pressure is on — and you also want these kids to do well," she said.

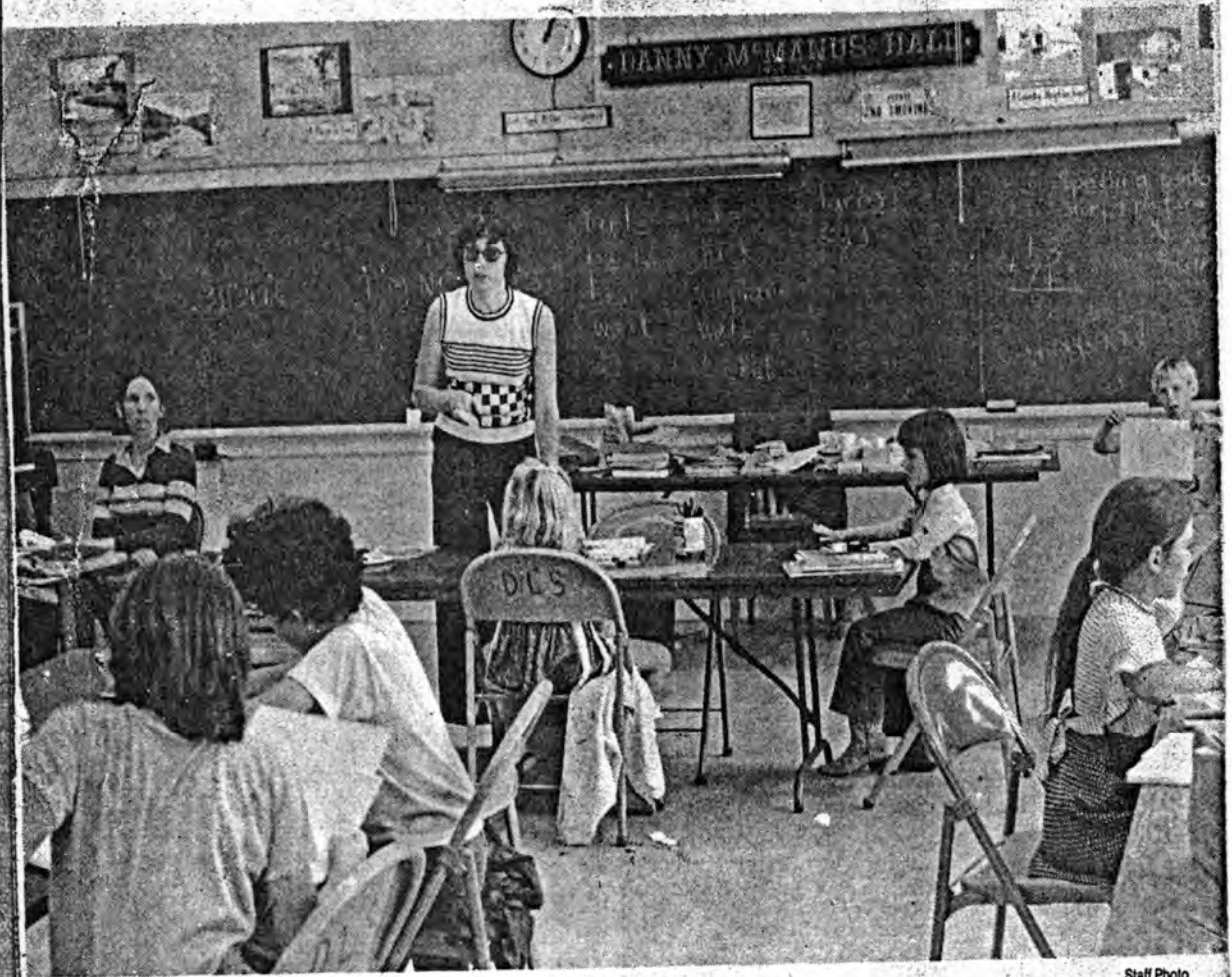
"The close relationships in the community have definitely been a positive influence," she adds. Children from about 10 families attend the school.

Built in 1928, the school was closed in 1968 when only 10 students remained. The property was then donated to the Fallbrook Union School district which undertook to provide an education for De Luz students in its facilities. The district then improved the structure to meet state earthquake standards and later reopened it as an ecology classroom.

Now it is back in use again, but only temporarily. When school reopens next fall, and De Luz road is repaired, the students will again be transported to Fallbrook by bus.

And the one-room schoolhouse will again revert to an ecology center.

# De Luz One-Room School



Staff Photo

ONE ROOM is now schoolhouse for 15 students and teacher Gail Raser.

DE LUZ ECOLOGY CENTER OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1988

PRESENTATION OF THE MEMORIAL PLAQUE FOR JACKIE JUDD  
SPONSORED BY MEMBERS OF THE FALLBROOK UNION ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

WILLIAM E. DIETRICH, PH.D.,  
SUPERINTENDENT

"A teacher affects eternity.

He can never tell where

his influence stops."

- Henry Adams

OUR THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR THE UNIQUE  
ROLE THEY HAVE PLAYED TOWARD MAKING  
THE DE LUZ ECOLOGY CENTER A VIABLE  
REALITY.



## Jackie Judd Memorial planned at 'Day at DeLuz'

Seventeen years after the program was begun, the DeLuz Ecology Center will host its first open house on Saturday, Jan. 9.

Students and teachers of the Fallbrook Elementary School District, and friends of the district's outdoor education program are invited to attend "A Day at DeLuz," sponsored by the school district, the DeLuz Ecology Center Committee, and the district's trustees.

The highlight of the day's events will be the presentation by the board of trustees of a memorial plaque honoring Jackie Judd, creator of the current DeLuz program, who died Nov. 16 following a short illness. Ms. Judd had been director of the DeLuz program since January, 1984.

According to district spokesperson Linda Cowan, the day's events will begin at noon with a presentation of the plaque in an informal ceremony. A picnic lunch will follow at the site.

Ms. Cowan said visitors were invited to bring their own picnic items, and to explore the extensive hiking trails at the site, which are an integral part of the outdoor education program.

She added that those interested in attending could call her at the district's Curriculum Resource Center at 723-7008 for directions or additional information.

## JACKIE JUDD

Private services will be held Thursday for Fallbrook teacher Jackie Judd, who died Monday in a Los Angeles hospital. She was 34.

A native of Chicago, Ill., Ms. Judd moved to Fallbrook in 1984, and was director of the DeLuz Ecology Center, an outdoor education program offered by the Fallbrook Elementary School District.

Ms. Judd was responsible for setting up the innovative program for third and fifth grade students, which combined environmental education and a living history program.

Ms. Judd was a member of the South Coast Audubon Society, the Association of Environmental and Outdoor Educators, and numerous environmental and educational organizations.

She is survived by her father, C. Edward Judd of San

Clemente; her mother, Lorraine, and two sisters: Vicki Lewis of Mission Viejo and Kim Randolph of Las Vegas, Nev.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting donations to the Volunteer Naturalists Association of Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park, P.O. Box 395, San Juan Capistrano, 92675.

Bending to somewhat conflicting desires of DeLuz parents, the Fallbrook elementary school board has agreed to keep the one-room school open for approximately 12 children.

DeLuz School, an ecology center that has not been used for regular classes for about 15 years, was reopened on a temporary basis March 8 due to fears regarding roads in poor condition.

Mrs. Peggy Durling, spokesperson for DeLuz parents, informed the board at Monday's meeting that 14 families (about 22 children) were utilizing the school.

A poll of the parents revealed to Mrs. Durling that parents of seven children are opposed to sending their offspring to DeLuz School; the parents of 12 are for keeping the school open until summer; the parents of four children will go either way, abiding by a board decision.

At this time five parents are willing to provide volunteer help for teacher Gail Raser; one each day.

Mrs. Durling said she had worked with Mrs. Raser during the past two weeks and that it was clear that it was difficult to cope with a new environment but that problems seem to be working out.

Some parents still feel that road conditions in the area are still scary largely due to truck and heavy equipment traffic.

Supt. Robert Murphy at this point said it was up to the board to decide whether the school should be kept open through the remainder of the year.

The superintendent said a survey showed that DeLuz parents were about equally divided on the issue of keeping their children close by. The original idea was based on doubtful road conditions. However, Murphy noted that the very first morning DeLuz School was in use, junior high school and high school students in the area were still attending classes in Fallbrook.

Some parents got the idea that the board was only going to operate DeLuz School until Easter Vacation (this week); but the board had not set a date when the classes would be terminated there.

The problem at DeLuz School apparently involves trying to pickup work from other teachers and handling 20 children on an individual basis

and on different grade levels.

Murphy looked back on the board action of March 6 and felt that the decision to use DeLuz School had perhaps been too hasty; there should have been at least one day's lag. He said he took full responsibility for his recommendation to the board.

Some parents of elementary school children have been transporting students into town.

Mrs. Pat Brain saw no problem in keeping DeLuz School open to elementary children. If roads do not improve she was for continuing until summer.

One parent at the meeting said the road is not that dangerous and they drive it twice a day.

Board President Mike Sumner asked Transportation Supervisor Russ Heyneman for his opinion on the condition of DeLuz Rd. He said he inspected the road and found it passable, adding the California Highway Patrol bus safety officer also inspected the road and okayed it for vans. Two vans are now being used for students east of Daily Rd. and they connect with a large school bus there for the trip to Fallbrook.

Sumner was most concerned about quality of education. He agreed that the teacher at DeLuz was doing a great job but felt the calibre of education was not as high as it could be.

Mrs. Rebecca Daze, trustee, felt that those parents of the 12 children should be able to remain at DeLuz School and that way all will be satisfied. She said she understands the safety concerns.

She immediately made a motion that the 12 children be allowed to stay at DeLuz School until classes dismiss in June and others should take the bus to their regular schools in Fallbrook.

In supporting Mrs. Daze, Trustee Warren Butcher observed he would take the work of the CHP inspector as to the safety of the road. But parents felt that perhaps the inspector did not see the heavy equipment and dump trucks.

The board voted to let the

(Please turn to Page A-16)

# DeLuz School stays open to serve 12

## DeLuz School

(Continued from Page A-1)

one-room school stay open for the 12 elementary pupils, 4-0, with Trustee Richard Cloonan absent.

In other matters, Mrs. Daze noted that a committee named to study more space at Maie Ellis Cafetorium in December had made no headway.

She said that to her knowledge Trustee Richard Cloonan, chairman, had held no real committee meetings.

"Dr. Cloonan has turned it into a public forum for nutrition," she complained. She said she supported his ideas regarding nutrition but wants some action by the committee.

She said there have been several meetings in the name of the committee but no official meeting of its members. The committee visited Temecula to view cafeteria facilities there, but objectives have never been discussed.

Mrs. Daze suggested the board could get him to form a nutrition committee but that the nutrition topic and cafeteria space problems should have no tie-in.

Trustee Cloonan was not present at Monday's meeting, but President Sumner promised to talk to him.

Board members enthusiastically voted to adopt Carl Hovey's summer school program this week.

President Sumner reminded the audience that the consensus of board opinion is that the program will be restricted to remedial type work and cut out frills.

Supt. Murphy said he had only received a couple of com-

ments from persons who wanted a more highly developed summer school program this year, i.e. arts and crafts type classes.

Sumner commended Summer School Principal Hovey for developing the program.

The summer school plan had been presented to the board March 6 as an agenda item for information only.

Also under discussion Monday was the setting of a date for the annual organizational meeting held in April. Supt. Murphy had suggested April 3 but this will conflict with a convention so the board decided to meet April 10 and skip the regular meeting on the 17th.

Trustees discussed briefly the advisability of discussing 20 applications for the position of assistant superintendent in executive session.

The item was on the agenda but Mrs. Daze objected; she said she had never seen the applications. Apparently Sumner, Vance and Butcher had seen them, but Cloonan had not. Butcher owned up that he had delayed a week before he had a chance to study the applications. In the end the item was delayed until two-board members could go over the applications.

The board will eventually cut the number of candidates down to five, at which time interviews will be held.



# Field trips enliven

A4 The Enterprise Thursday, December 20, 1979

## *Character*

# old schoolhouse



**HIKING** — Tell these kids to take a hike and they do. Students from Fallbrook St. School learn about nature during field trips to the old De Luz school

house. Here, students in Mrs. Jane Binder's fifth grade class hike across a suspension bridge to the site of a 100-year-old barn.

By **BARBARA BARNHILL**  
In the early morning stillness, the grounds of the one-room school house are the

haunts of deer ambling across the playground. Wayward peacocks strut across the front lawn while their more

timid mates peer out from under hedges. Owls, raccoons, opossum and coyotes have already retired. Adding to the

silence, is the sound of DeLuz Creek at a slow gurgle nearby.

Having stood for nearly 50 years, the DeLuz school house is rich in local natural history.

It seemed this summer the school house was destined to remain the domain of an occasional visiting rattlesnake or an independent kitty. With Proposition 13 cutbacks, elementary trustees didn't think it feasible to pay a full-time teacher to maintain it as an ecology center; a place for children to learn about their own position in local habitat.

But a resourceful principal and a teacher's aide made it possible for at least a portion of Fallbrook's school children to take the field trips to DeLuz. Fallbrook Street School Principal Tal Cowan made arrangements to staff the ecology center with a teacher's aide, Candy Layton, who, conveniently is a former educational instructor for the San Diego Zoo.

Layton is paid an hourly rate to hold classroom sessions and conduct nature hikes until each of the classes at Fallbrook Street School have visited the center, learning about nature and local history.

Upon her assignment, Layton set out to gather as much information as she could, mostly by visiting DeLuz old-timers. Part of her class is based on the old stories, which help the children learn something of their own heritage.

She tells of early pioneers who settled the area just below the Santa Ana mountain range. Avocado groves were not in abundance then as they are now, she explains. The economy was based on apricots, raisins and oak wood. When the crops thrived,

it became necessary to build railroads to get the produce to market. Early trains ran near DeLuz and through to the north.

Before first settlers, Indians made good use of the marshes, an area so important to their way of life that various tribes would fight for control. "How did they do that?" one boy asked. "Did they light cattails on fire and throw them at each other?"

"Not quite," Layton says smiling, and slightly changing the subject.

She waves a cattail in the air. "Ever watch a dog tear

one of these apart? Or maybe you've torn them apart yourselves. You know the fluffy stuff inside? Well, Indians had many uses for these. Besides stuffing their leather moccasins with it to keep warm, they also used the cattail as the first disposable diaper," she explains, demonstrating a way of cutting the plant to fit a baby's bottom.

After the history lesson, she outlines the day's activities which include making plaster of Paris footprints of the split-hoof deer, blue jay, Canadian goose, the mink, porcupine

raccoon and fox. Children study plants native to the area and animals such as tarantulas, rosy boa snakes, toads and frogs.

The day also includes a two and a half mile hike through the woods, across a suspension bridge and finally, to the site of a barn built at least 100 years ago. Layton will ask the children to sit quietly and sketch the barn - trying to get the feel of it paying careful attention to detail.

Mrs. Jean Binder, a teacher whose class recently visited the school house, notes the value of the program. As

children were getting ready to go exploring, she remarked that the program gives more meaning to nature than could a classroom setting alone. Without the kind of knowledge Candy can give them, it's hard for them to enjoy the outdoors as fully," she said.

The DeLuz school house was built in 1928 and fell out of use when the area merged with the Fallbrook elementary district in 1968. The first DeLuz school was built in the late 1800s. Classes of up to nearly 30 children attended the school during its history, in grades kindergarten through eighth.



**OPEN AGAIN** — This summer it looked like the ecology center at the DeLuz school house wouldn't be open, since paying a full time teacher would have been too costly. Thanks to teacher's aide, Candy Layton, a former instructor at the San Diego Zoo, the center is open again at least to part of Fallbrook's school children.

# DeLuz Ecology Center site of pilot conservation program

June 2, 1983

Ninety sixth grade students from Fallbrook Street School participated in a week of conservation, ecology, nature and Indian studies at the DeLuz Ecology Center the week of May 23, 1983 through May 27.

The program was a pilot program developed by the Fallbrook Elementary School District and Gale Cunningham, program coordinator, working in cooperation with Pam Mumford and the Fallbrook Street School Parent Teacher Association.

The students participated in a variety of activities. On Monday and Tuesday students built a wikiup, a primitive Indian dwelling, out of poles and vines they cut and gathered themselves. A nature walk identifying plants and wild life was aided by experts from the Mission Conservation District.

George Massey and Mike Reagan of the National Gold Prospectors Association demonstrated gold panning and sluicing. Students panned for gold themselves in a stream running through the center and found some "color".

On an adjoining ranch, the DeLuz Ranch Property, a demonstration of horsemanship was put on by Burt Lawrence who was working with his cutting horses.

Students also designed and painted a totem pole, created corn husk dolls, made leaf prints and did stone painting.

Friday was "Little House on the Prairie" day. Students dressed in authentic 1900 clothing, packed natural lunches (prior to packaged food), made ink from leaves and berries and made writing pens from manzanita sticks. They made their own autograph books and signed them with authentic ink and pen, as a keepsake of their week in nature.

The week-long program is a pilot program with the possibilities of expanding it to all of the district schools next year.

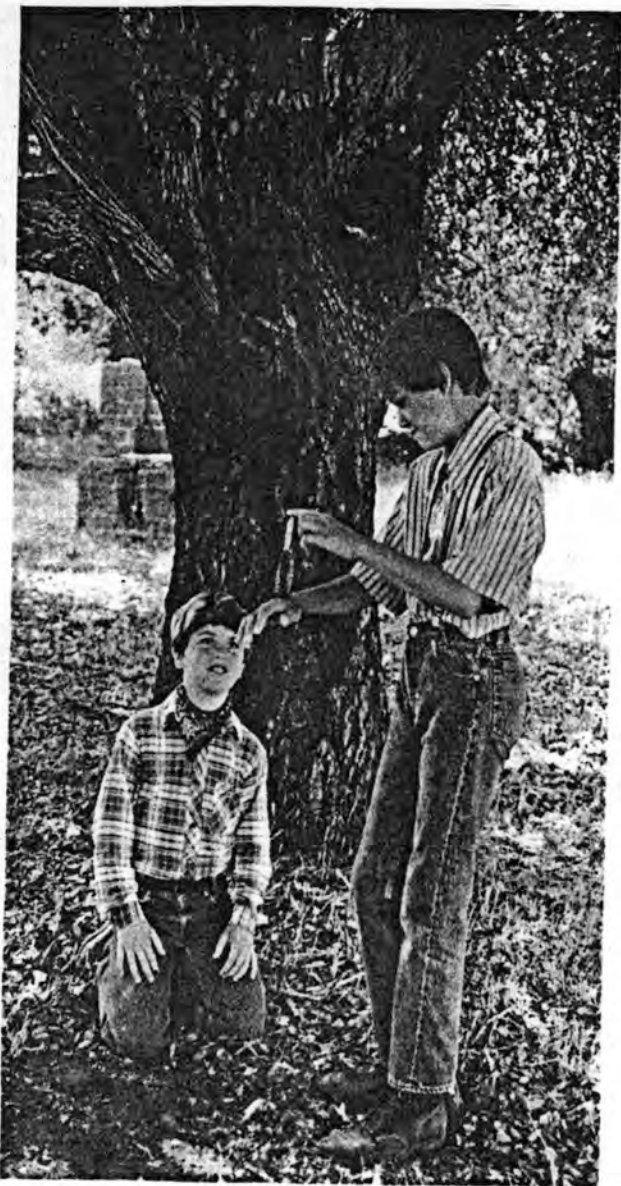
The DeLuz Ecology Center is located on over 120 acres of heavily wooded property with running streams and an excellent variety of native plants and wildlife eleven miles northeast of Fallbrook.



PANNING FOR GOLD in a DeLuz stream at the Elementary Ecology Center during pilot program day camp are these Fallbrook St. sixth graders, from left, Inez Garcia, Yana Craig and Alycia Craig.



LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE plants and especially poison oak growing just behind them as they check a little California Live Oak tree are, from left, Bobby Crinklaw, Juan Magallanes and Olga Lopez.



**OLD TIME GAME** Mumblety-peg fascinates Fallbrook St. School sixth graders, Niles Pierce, left, and Mark Redman who dressed the part for the Little House on the Prairie final day program.



**WEARING OLD FASHION CLOTHES\***for their Little House on the Prairie day at the Ecology Center in DeLuz are, from left, Kim Russell, Cora Schooler, Jennifer Thompson and Gale Hawk, teacher.



Staff Photo By ROBIN PIERSON

FALLBROOK students were among 60 who visited the De Luz center last week.

## De Luz offers yesteryear reminder

FALLBROOK — Sixty sixth-graders spent a week outside learning how people survived before the advent of mobile homes and supermarkets.

For five days last week, two classes of sixth-graders rode a bus on narrow, country roads into the wilds of De Luz. Their destination — a one-room school house built in the dawn of this century. Their teacher — nature. And their guide into the past was first grade teacher, Gale Cunningham.

Cunningham pulled the pilot program together in less than three days with less than \$1,000. With access to the 120 acres owned by the Fallbrook Union School District in the rural De Luz canyon area, her resources were abundant.

At the stream that runs by the old but sturdy school house, the students cut down bushes to build a wikiup — a primitive Indian dwelling. They wove grasses and grapevines for its covering.

They made ink out of strawberries and from leaves and berries. Their homework assignment was to make a pen out of a piece of wood.

Hiking on a trail built by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, they learned to identify edible onions and a plant used by the Indians to quench thirst.

Like pioneer children, they made and played with corn husk dolls.

For snacks they ate fruit leather made of a paste of strawberries and sugar spread thinly and dried in the sun for 48 hours.

On Friday, the last day of the project, Cunningham asked them to bring lunches authentic to the early 1900s, "before pre-packaged junk food. I didn't see twinkies," she said.

The program will be evaluated and if deemed worthy, will be offered to other elementary school children in the district and possibly the county.

## School camp gives kids taste of Southwest past

By Lynn Steinberg  
The Times-Advocate

**FALLBROOK** — Some 90 Fallbrook elementary students took a trip back in time last week.

As part of a unique outdoor program, sixth-grade youngsters from Fallbrook Street School built primitive dwellings, constructed rudimentary writing instruments and designed totem poles — all in an effort to simulate Southwestern life in the early 1900s.

The week-long pilot project — which ran daily from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. — replaced the county-sponsored sixth-grade camp program scrapped from the Fallbrook budget last year because of fiscal constraints.

Fallbrook trustees annually spent \$25,000 to send sixth-grade students to the county's outdoor camp program. The project, all agreed, was a desirable one. Students — who stayed overnight during the week of camp — experienced nature firsthand. But district officials could no longer afford the \$25,000 pricetag.

So they improvised. A faculty committee formed to study alternatives to the outdoor education program and came up with a variation that cost only \$500. The project taps the resources of local professionals who donate their time. And instead of using the county's facilities at Camp Cuyamaca, students daily made their way to the district's old school house in De Luz.

The De Luz school, built in 1910, is set amid 120 acres of heavily wooded district land replete with nature trails and streams. The school house, abandoned long ago for classroom use, has since served as a meeting place for local community groups and the site of occasional district field trips.

In an effort to transform the school house and the surrounding area into a suitable home for the district's outdoor project, volunteer crews composed mostly of parents came in to clean up the sorely neglected trails in time for the first influx of students who showed up last Monday.

Their first assignment was to build a suitable home — which they did by weaving the vines and branches they collected through long poles. The dwellings, said teacher Gaile Cunningham, "are very primitive" but sufficient to house the students who retreated to them daily for lunch.

Representatives from Fallbrook's Mission Conservation District showed up to help students build and properly mark nature trails, and members of the National Gold Prospectors Association gave students a lesson in panning for gold in De Luz Creek.

Students, who found a 15-foot log in the creek, dragged it back to their dwelling units and painted it with grotesque faces designed to ward off evil spirits.



Dan Rios/The Times-Advocate

Stacy Pinnix created a corn husk doll.



March 8, 1984

## La Paloma students initiate De Luz outdoor education program

The Fallbrook Union Elementary School District's Outdoor Education Program was a success with La Paloma sixth grade students who were the year's first visitors to the DeLuz Ecology Center. The students returned each day tired from their experiences in the chaparral covered hills but brimming with

enthusiasm for the next day's visit.

The DeLuz Committee from the school District worked many hours to prepare a program that would be exciting and interesting for the sixth grade students throughout the district.

Activities at the Ecology Center are varied and challenging. The students

study geology, stream biology, fire safety, ecology, and first aid. Other activities include animal tracking, panning for gold, and orienteering.

Student groups will arrive at 9 a.m. and return at 1:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. On Thursday, classes build a solar still, learn map and compass skills,

study survival techniques, and make their own lunch; stone soup, stick bread, and real butter. These activities and an evaluation of the week by the students and teachers make Thursday's departure 5 p.m.

The Center is staffed by Jackie Judd and her assistant David Hartje.

One class will visit the Center each week. All sixth grade classes in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District will have an opportunity to attend this excellent outdoor education program by the end of the 83/84 school year.



### Roughing It

Sixty sixth-graders spent a week outside learning how people survived before the advent of mobilehomes and supermarkets.  
NORTH COUNTY, Page 15.

Enterprise May 31, 1984

# Ecology Center earns good reviews

By WALT FRAZER

With two weeks left to run this year, the DeLuz Ecology Center is getting favorable reviews from parents, teachers, administrators and above all, the children of the Fallbrook Elementary School District.

Based in the old one-room De Luz School House (which dates back to 1927), the outdoor education program emphasizes teaching sixth

grade students about the local environment.

"Their enthusiasm and willingness to participate have been really great," said Jackie Judd, outdoor education specialist and teacher at the facility.

Judd shares teaching responsibility with David Harje, who has worked with Judd as a nature specialist for outdoor education programs in Orange County.

Teacher Peggy Bobo, retiring this year after 28 years with the district, recently took her sixth grade class from Mary Fay Pendleton school to the De Luz facility, and came away "very impressed."

"I learned a lot I didn't know," she said, "about survival and plant identification."

Bobo pronounced the program "very worthwhile, and very thought-provoking," adding that the children had written the board of trustees of the district also praising the program.

During the four days that each class visits the site, they take three hikes, which, according to Judd, each focus on a different aspect of the area's environment: the Chaparral (the native habitat of the surrounding hillsides); the geology of the area; and the riparian or stream-side ecology, focusing on stream life and insect cycles.

Between lessons, the children also learn new and environmental games, which offer children a chance to play with what they learn, and emphasize teamwork as a means of attaining goals.

Judd, who also has had classroom teaching ex-

perience, noted that outdoor education programs such as this are successful partly because, as she said "real learning comes from curiosity more than from force."

She added that children who have difficulty in normal classroom settings often respond well to outdoor programs.

Judd explained that the emphasis of the program is on "hands-on" learning because through the physical involvement with the subject matter "the kids learn more about the environment than from textbooks."

She described the outdoor education experience as being filled with "learning moments" when the children spot some of the animals living in the area. These encounters involve the children directly in the learning process.

There is also an effort to relate what the children learn in De Luz to what they learn in the classroom.

"We want the kids to know about where they live," said Judd.

"It's important, for example, for them to know that there were Indians living in this area."

Judd added that she was surprised how little the children knew about California Indians, and about their relationship to the Californias missions and history.

Part of the teaching materials used indoors at the ecology center include an Indian metate, a hollowed, flat stone used by them to grind nuts and grain, which was

found near the center some time ago.

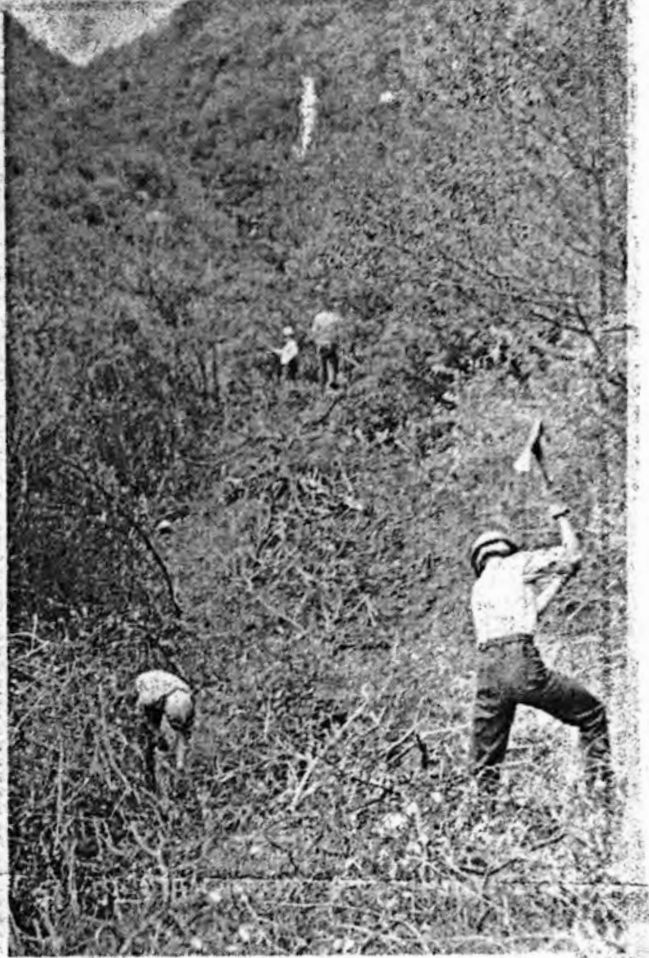
Among other subjects covered by the program are orienteering, shelter construction, survival education, and how to recognize edible and poisonous plants. "These are skills they could use camping or in case of a disaster," adds Judd.



new trail for the De Luz Ecology



STUDENTS ALSO LEARN about local history in the program. Here a sixth grader tries out a metate (used by the Indians to grind nuts and grain) which was found near the school.

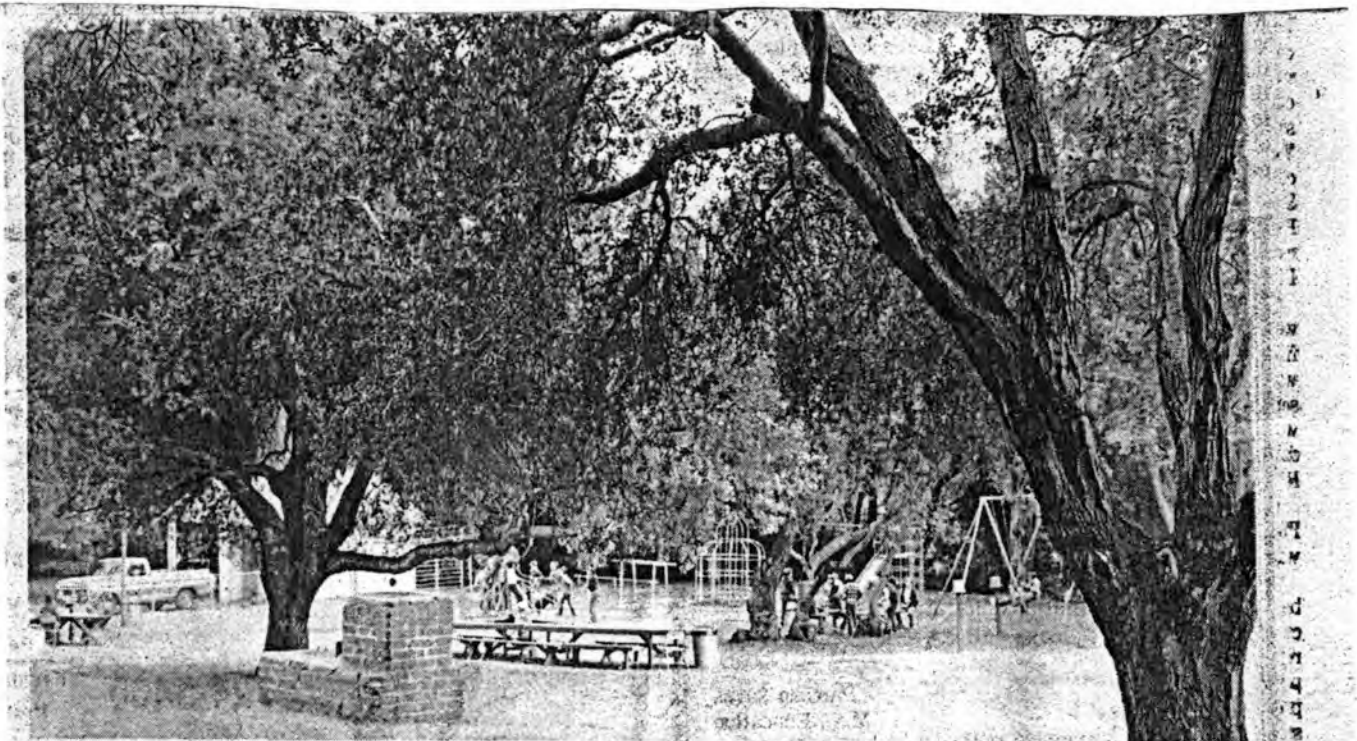


CCC WORKERS (above left) blaze a new trail for the De Luz Ecology center through eight foot high brush. The cleared brush was then chopped into a mulch (above right) to prevent erosion on the newly-cut trails by a heavy-duty "brush hog" towed behind a caterpillar tractor. The equipment and operator were donated by East Brothers Commercial Landscape Service.



INSIDE the newly refurbished school house students gather round teachers Jackie Judd and Dave Hartje to get instructions before hitting the

trails. Topics for hikes include geology, and chaparral and riparian (stream bed) habitats.



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**AN IDYLLIC PLAYGROUND** is formed by the woods and lawn immediately behind the schoolhouse. Each class spends four days at the facility, featuring a picnic in the park-like setting on Thursday.

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## Education

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The San Diego Union/James Skovmand

Teacher Jackie Judd, in period costume, holds a spelling class, above. The students were stumped by "corral." Students practice cursive "n's" on slateboards, right.



PAINING A TOTEM POLE at the ecology center day camp last week, were from left, Lydia Zapata, Stacy Pinnix, Leigh Wilson and Ty Morrow.

# San Diego

North Coast



The San Diego Union/James Skovmand

A one-room school in De Luz transports these Fallbrook third-graders back through time for a one-day

learning experience featuring writing slates, McGuffey's Readers — and discipline. Story on Page 2.

# La Paloma students initiate De Luz outdoor education program

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study survival techniques, and make their own lunch; stone soup, stick bread, and real butter. These activities and an evaluation of the week by the students and teachers make Thursday's departure 5 p.m.

The Center is staffed by Jackie Judd and her assistant David Hartje.

One class will visit the Center each week. All sixth grade classes in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District will have an opportunity to attend this excellent outdoor education program by the end of the 83/84 school year.

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1985



# Spelling bees, slates live on in De Luz trip

## Third-graders get sample of one-room schoolhouse

By John Berhman  
Staff Writer

DE LUZ — For one day this fall, third-graders in the Fallbrook Union (Elementary) School District will have the chance to go back 75 years in time.

Back to a one-room schoolhouse, to writing on slates, reading out of McGuffey's textbooks, daily spelling bees, and square dancing.

To a time when students gathered outside to salute the flag, when the teacher's whistle summoned kids from the playground.

And to a time when students did what the teacher told them to do — or else.

The school district transports its third-grade pupils from their 1985 classrooms to the one-room De Luz school — now called, in keeping with the times and use, the De Luz Ecology Center — and teacher Jackie Judd.

The trip back in time is preceded by a talk Judd gives on Fridays to youngsters in their regular Fallbrook classrooms. Then, the following week, the journey to the past begins with a 10-mile-long winding bus ride through scenic rural mountains and oak-dotted landscape to this remote community north of Fallbrook.

The 30 or so third-graders were greeted Wednesday morning by Judd, who was wearing a high-collar blouse, ankle-length skirt, high-button shoes — and a big smile.

Also greeting the youngsters was Stubby, a friendly Australian shepherd-collie, who lives across the street but spends most of his time sitting on the old school's front steps, and by an unnamed gray cat. The dog later bumped noisily against the school door, yearning for young attention — and the cat was constantly escorted out of the classroom.

During the flag salute, as the youngsters stood in a semi-circle, they appeared to be impressed with the old building. The words "De Luz School" are carved near the top of the structure.

Up the stairs and back in time the youngsters went.

They gazed at the high ceiling, down to the hardwood floors, and straight ahead to the five benches before them.

"These are our slates," Judd said, placing her hand on a pile of the slate boards on her desk. "Years ago, there was nothing around for many, many miles. There were no stores to buy pencils and paper, so students used slates. The slates we will be using today come from the old blackboard that was used when this school opened in 1927."

(Later, Judd explained that the existing stucco-covered brick building actually was the third schoolhouse in the De Luz area, with earlier versions having been built, used and abandoned. One was on the old Tena-ja Truck Trail; the other was not far from this site on De Luz-Murrieta Road.

(The existing school was deeded over to the Fallbrook Union (Elementary) School District in 1968 after the De Luz School District decided it could not afford the \$28,000 needed to bring the building up to state earthquake safety standards. Until that time, De Luz youngsters, kindergartners through eighth grade, attended the one-room schoolhouse.

(The school received little use, except for community meetings and times when the De Luz area was flooded and youngsters couldn't be bused to Fallbrook. Judd was hired in 1984 and the district began this special program.)

The youngsters' unfamiliarity with slate became obvious.

"What is slate?" Judd asked. "It's a type of rock, that with heat and pressure becomes flattened out, and then is dug out."

Judd began the lesson.

"Remember, you can't cross your legs, or you won't be able to hold

your slates," advised teacher Don Sieber, whose third-grade pupils from Fallbrook Street Elementary School were the guests.

The youngsters — especially the left-handed ones — were about to learn another pearl from the past.

"In the early days," Judd told them, "everything was made for right-handers. Left-handers either had their left hand tied behind them or had to sit on it. It was a right-handed world. My mom was left-handed, and she had to sit on it during writing lessons."

Judd then proceeded to write out a series of "e's" on the big blackboard and asked the youngsters to imitate the writing on their slates.

The squeaking chalk was unnerving.

"When using your chalk, try not to make it squeak," Judd requested. "Don't hold it (the chalk) so hard," she advised one boy. "Use your whole hand."

The squeaking diminished and the youngsters seemed to get the hang of it.

Next, it was time for math.

Aide Jerry Palculich took charge on this lesson. Using an obviously old math book, Palculich posed the math problem: "In 1910, a newspaper cost a penny. John's father gave him a nickel for the evening paper. How much money did John give back to his father?"

While one row of youngsters worked this problem on the blackboard, the others worked on their slates. The problems got progressively harder.

Then, something happened that would not have happened in 1910. The telephone in the classroom rang. The students were unfazed.

\* \* \*

During a break, Judd explained that the special program actually runs for two days for each class. One day is devoted to a turn-of-the-century schoolhouse setting — 1910 is being used this year to coincide with the reappearance of Halley's Comet. And the second day goes back even further in time, to hundreds of years ago when Indians roamed the area.

"We study the three local Indian bands: the Luiseno, Juaneno and Cupeno," Judd said. "In the classroom, we study their lifestyle and culture.

Judd said the two-day program for third-graders will continue until December.

Then, in January, there will be a program for fifth-graders that will include more extensive study of the area's flora and fauna, environmental awareness and training, and some survival skills. The class will help youngsters with the county camp program that is offered to sixth-graders at Cuyamaca.

For a time, when budget constraints forced the district to eliminate its participation in the county's camp program, sixth-graders came to the ecology center here, Judd said.

The program for fifth-graders started in January 1984, when Judd started here, and the program for third-graders started in September 1984.

\* \* \*

Recess ended, and it was back to work in the classroom. The subject was reading, from the McGuffey's Eclectic Reader, copyright 1879.

Judd told the youngsters that the McGuffey's were the main readers of the 1800s and early 1900s. She said that usually when a youngster finished reading one of them, it was on to the next grade. She also said that many youngsters back then quit school after eighth grade, or about age 14, because they had to help their parents.

"Lots of the stories in the McGuffey's have a moral," Judd said. "Such as never tell a lie, respect your mother and father, treat your brothers and sisters well, and be good citizens."

The youngsters read two stories



aloud, taking turns reading the numbered paragraphs. One story, "Henry, The Bootblack," told of a poor boy who found a man's pocket-book loaded with money, but he returned it, and was rewarded with \$1. The boy used the \$1 to buy shoe polish and a shoeshine kit. "Black your boots, sir, please?" the boy asked politely. He turned all his earnings over to his mother.

The children described the boy as "polite, honest and responsible."

The second story, "Susie Sunbeam," told of a happy, pleasant girl who offered a poor, picked-upon girl a nice dress and shoes. The youngsters pegged Susie as being "someone who cares about others."

"Years ago, some schools had a spelling bee every day," explained Palculich. "And, the winner each day got to wear a penny with a hole in it for the whole day. The last winner of the year got to keep the penny."

At first, Judd used the spelling word list that teacher Sieber has brought with him. The words included: lunch, Sunday, uncle, hunt, funny, dove, covers, someone, money, fudge, jumping, playing, walking, become, bunch and study.

Judd then switched to her old-time word list, which included: crumbs, flour, hire and stories. The word "corral" stumped all the kids.

Next, Judd told the pupils about Halley's Comet, and explained that

trip back into the past because that was the last time that Halley's Comet was visible from earth.

\* \* \*

"It's a good program because the kids get a feel of the one-room schoolhouse and what it was like to go to school back then," Sieber said.

"It's a real positive experience," added Judd. "The kids really look forward to coming out here and they want to be here. It also gives them some idea of what it was like when their grandparents and great-grandparents went to school."

Judd also said she personally finds the job rewarding and "very challenging. It also fulfills a fantasy I have always had to teach in a one-

room district."

And, as for the kids:

"I like it here," said Erin Friel, 8. "It's so much quieter here than at our school. I liked writing on the slate, too. It was fun. But using a pencil and paper is easier."

Matt Krueger, 8, said he'll take 1985 over 1910, even as he sipped from his can of Original Coke. "I like sitting at my desk better than on a bench. And, I like using a pencil and paper better than a slate — they're easier to use."

Finally, Judd rang her old school bell, and the youngsters returned to the old, one-room schoolhouse. Then, before the youngsters realized it, the bus was at the front door, ready to take them back to 1985.

# Today's Scene

TIMES-ADVOCATE

March 28 1985



Dan Rios/The Times-Advocate

Reynell Deukes, 11, inspects a rock for traces of gold during the four-day field trip.

Fallbrook gives its students  
**a natural  
education**



Evaluating a prospecting find are Tanesha Carhart, 11, and Jerry Palculich, an aide.



Dan Rios/The Times-Advocate

**Gold fever** — Joe Cunningham, 12, of Fallbrook tries his luck panning for gold in De Luz Creek. He may not strike it rich, but he and his

classmates will learn about nature during a four-day field trip to the Fallbrook De Luz Ecology Center. Story and more photos on **D1**.

By Laura Kaufman  
Times-Advocate Staff Writer

**D**E LUZ — The delicate work of nature is all around us. It's just a matter of listening for the tap-tap of an acorn woodpecker. Or rolling over a fallen tree limb to view the tiny forest critters that are slowly returning it to the soil:

**'All of a sudden, it's not just a rock, it becomes something special,' said Jackie Judd, director of the center.**

Sixth-graders in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District have an opportunity to discover the wonders of nature at the De Luz Ecology Center.

"All of a sudden, it's not just a rock, it becomes something special," said Jackie Judd, director of the center. "The more they know about the environment, the more it becomes special to them, and the more apt they are to feel responsible for it."

Judd, a specialist in outdoor education, and teacher's assistant Jerry Palculich teach the program at the 1927 De Luz schoolhouse and on the surrounding 120 acres.

The site was deeded to the district in 1968, when the De Luz School District merged with the Fallbrook district because it could not afford to bring the old building up to modern earthquake safety standards, said Linda Cowen, district coordinator of curriculum resources. Cowen is one of those who pushed for the ecology program.

Although some teachers had conducted day-long ecology classes, a permanent program was not begun until January 1984, when Judd was hired.

During the four-day program, sixth-graders take hikes and learn such survival skills as building a fire and building a shelter, said Judd. She patterned the program after the Audubon Ecology Camp in Wyoming.

One recent day, Judd led a group of San Onofre School students in John Bickerton's class on a hike around the local chaparral. She pointed out the way the curved and pointed leaves of oak trees help rainwater drip from leaf to leaf.

She rolled a branch over and pointed out a brown Jerusalem beetle beneath it. The bug, nicknamed "nino de la tierra," or "child of the earth," is considered a bad omen in Mexico.

Judd asked the students what other creatures might help to return leaves and dead wood to the soil.

"One time an elephant could come through," suggested student Pat Ernst.

"Where are we now, Pat?" Judd asked him, with a patient smile. "The possibility is pretty remote. We're nowhere near the Wild Animal Park."

Judd encouraged the students to turn over leaves and fallen tree bark to observe the forest creatures.

Not all students were impressed by the insects, despite their role in nature.

"I can't stand bugs," Danny Sullivan told his friend. "They drive me up the wall."

Judd led the students to a clearing where there were scraps of wood and garbage. She explained that in centuries to come, archaeologists might consider this a valuable find.

"The plastic spoons and Styrofoam of today are the artifacts of tomorrow," said Judd.

And what will future generations infer about this present civilization from its trash, she asked the students.

"That we lived in a very messy world," said Pat.

It was time then for the day's highlight — hunting for bugs in De Luz Creek.

While one group fished with nets for insects, the other half of Bickerton's class panned for gold upstream.

But no one appeared to be striking it rich.

"There's no gold in here," said Peto

Abila, who was wading in the middle of the stream.

"You've got to have a little patience," Bickerton told him.

"Look how much I've got," said Tiffany Day, holding up her glistening blue pan.

"That's just speckles," her friend, Rita Curtis, chided.

**During the four-day program, sixth-graders take hikes and learn such survival skills as building a fire and building a shelter.**

But according to Palculich, there is gold in the stream, if only a minute amount. When it rains, the gold imbedded in rocks washes away into the water, she explained.

While some students panned for gold, others prospected by using tiny pickaxes to break open rocks.

Meanwhile, back at the schoolhouse, Judd's students were busy examining their insects under microscopes.

Not all of the specimens wanted to stand still for inspection, though. Student Christi Whitehead screamed when a worm-like creature jumped onto her shirt.

One of her classmates promptly returned the bug to its proper position under the lens.

"We ought to put a bunch on Christi's chest, and she'll look like Indiana Jones," Judd quipped.

Bugs were not the only visitors to the ecology center.

Beneath the eaves of the schoolhouse entrance hung two snoozing bats, looking rather like scraps of weathered brown paper sacks.

"This one showed up about a month ago," said teacher's aide Palculich, pointing to the larger bat, which appeared to have a mangled leg. A second, smaller bat had dropped by several days ago, she said.

So far, the bats have minded their own business.

One of the more unique and sometimes distasteful experiences the students have at the center is their examination of owl pellets — hunks of rodent fur and skeletons that barn owls regurgitate. Judd explained that the pellets are collected at different locations and fumigated by a commercial firm.

On a recent day, students either reacted with fascination or disgust as they pulled apart the brownish-gray material, some as large as pingpong balls.

"Ooooh, we've got a mole," exclaimed Stephanie Beck, holding up a tiny skull with sharp teeth, imbedded in the furry ball.

"This is neat, here's a hipbone," she added.

Some students were more squeamish than others.

"Man, I'm not touching that," said Melvin Johnson, moving his chair slightly. "I need some gloves."

Judd said the ecology program is a positive experience for her and the sixth-grade students alike because "the kids want to be there."

But four days can pass awfully quickly.

"The only drawback is that you get so close to the kids, it's hard to let them go. It's hard to say goodbye," said Judd.

# Outdoor center offers glimpse of yesteryear

By WALT FRAZER  
Staff Writer

FALLBROOK — Picture a group of third grade children in a one-room school house, seated on rows of wooden seats hunched over their slates and McGuffey Readers.

Later in the day, the children will participate in a spelling bee. After lunch they'll play on the swing set or the roundabout, or take a break from playing tag beneath the oak trees surrounding the schoolhouse, drinking fresh, pure spring water.

Sound like a story your grandmother used to tell?

The image fades as the children board a big yellow bus for their long trip back to 1985.

The glimpse of yesteryear is part of

the program offered children in the Fallbrook Elementary School District at the remote DeLuz Ecology Center north of Fallbrook.

The schoolhouse and surrounding 120 acres of hillside and creekland came to the Fallbrook district after the building was declared unsafe in 1968, and the tiny DeLuz school district donated it to the Fallbrook district.

Last year the district renovated the building and began a pilot program headed by outdoor education specialist Jackie Judd.

This year, the program was expanded to include third graders, and, according to Judd, focuses on local and regional history as well as the four-day nature study program of-

ferred to sixth graders.

To lend the program historical accuracy to provide the children with an experience of what it was like to go to school in the 1920s, Judd interviewed longtime residents of the area to find out subjects, materials, and games the children played.

In addition to the age of the building, which includes the old school bell from the first DeLuz school built nearly 100 years ago, the surrounding area looks much the same as it did 40 years ago, according to Judd.

Add to that the taste of spring water from old wells on the site, recently found to be more pure than "city" water, and the fact that Judd and aide Gina Palculich dress up in long skirts, puffy blouses, and wear

their hair up in buns, and the children get to live a history lesson, at least for one day.

Judd said that the program is designed to lead in to the regular fourth grade history series dealing with California.

Therefore, the second day focuses on the Indians of Southern California, which is a real education for most third-graders.

"Most kids in California think only of Plains and East Coast Indians," said Judd.

The Luisenos, who inhabited the North County area before the missions, led very different lives.

"The living was fairly casual, like it

(Continued on Page 14)

## Fallbrook outdoor education program ...

(Continued from Page 13)

is now," she said, not at all like the warring Indian nations of the east pictured in movies.

The third graders finish the day with a "mini-hike" in the miles of trails cut last year by California Conservation Corps workers.

The hikes are led by the children's classroom teachers, and children are taught Luiseno words and uses of various plants and herbs growing in the hills.

The sixth grade program, according to Judd, studies the flora and

fauna of the oak woodland, chaparral, and riparian habitats found in the DeLuz and Fallbrook areas.

"It focusses on how everything fits into the environment, including humans, and why," said Judd.

In addition to natural history, she also teaches the sixth grade children about hiking hazards and simple survival techniques that could save lives of those lost on outings.

The program also includes orienteering hikes, camp fire building techniques, and shelter construction.

Starting with insect and soil cycles, Judd said she attempts to put the

children into the perspective of the natural world that surrounds them.

"It seems to me the more they know about nature, the more they develop a feeling of responsibility," she added.

Judd stressed the importance of programs such as the outdoor education program as part of an ongoing education of children to appreciate and respect the environment.

"When you start to lose things," she pointed out, "they start to become important: the value starts to become recognizable as it starts to disappear."

Fallbrook superintendent William Diedrich said that those who have visited the site have been pleased not only with the idea of outdoor education, but with the program Judd and the district's outdoor education committee have set up.

He noted that the district is considering adding facilities to permit the children to stay overnight at the facility, as many other San Diego County districts do at Camp Cuyamaca.

"We also would like to look into having other districts use the site on a pay-as-you-go basis," Diedrich added.





**ARTIFACT DONATED** — Dave Smith, representing Mathews Ranch, donated a centuries-old bowl of Indian origin to the DeLuz Ecology Center last week. The bowl was discovered about 15 years ago when a bulldozer turned it up in a field. It served as a dog bowl, a birdbath and a rain catcher until new owners took over the ranch this year. The new owners decided to donate the bowl for public viewing. With Smith is Jackie Judd of the ecology center.

# Giving kids a sense of history

De Luz kids turn the clock back by 75 years

By Laura Kaufman  
Times-Advocate Staff Writer

**D**E LUZ — The date on the chalk board says Nov. 21, 1910. This year, William Taft is president, and the world experiences a collective shiver as the mysterious Halley's Comet soars through the skies.

Children at the country school here recite from their McGuffey's Readers and practice their handwriting on wooden slates. Before recess, they will have their fingernails examined to make sure they are practicing proper hygiene.

Seventy-five years later, school marm Jackie Judd is re-creating the "good ol' golden rule days" at the one-room schoolhouse, since renamed the De Luz Ecology Center. Today, Michelle Franks' third-grade class from Maie Ellis School in Fallbrook is taking part in the two-day program.

"Yesterday is a hard concept for kids," explains Ms. Judd, clad in a long skirt and high-topped shoes and her long hair pulled back into a bun. "Even ten years ago seems like a long time to them.

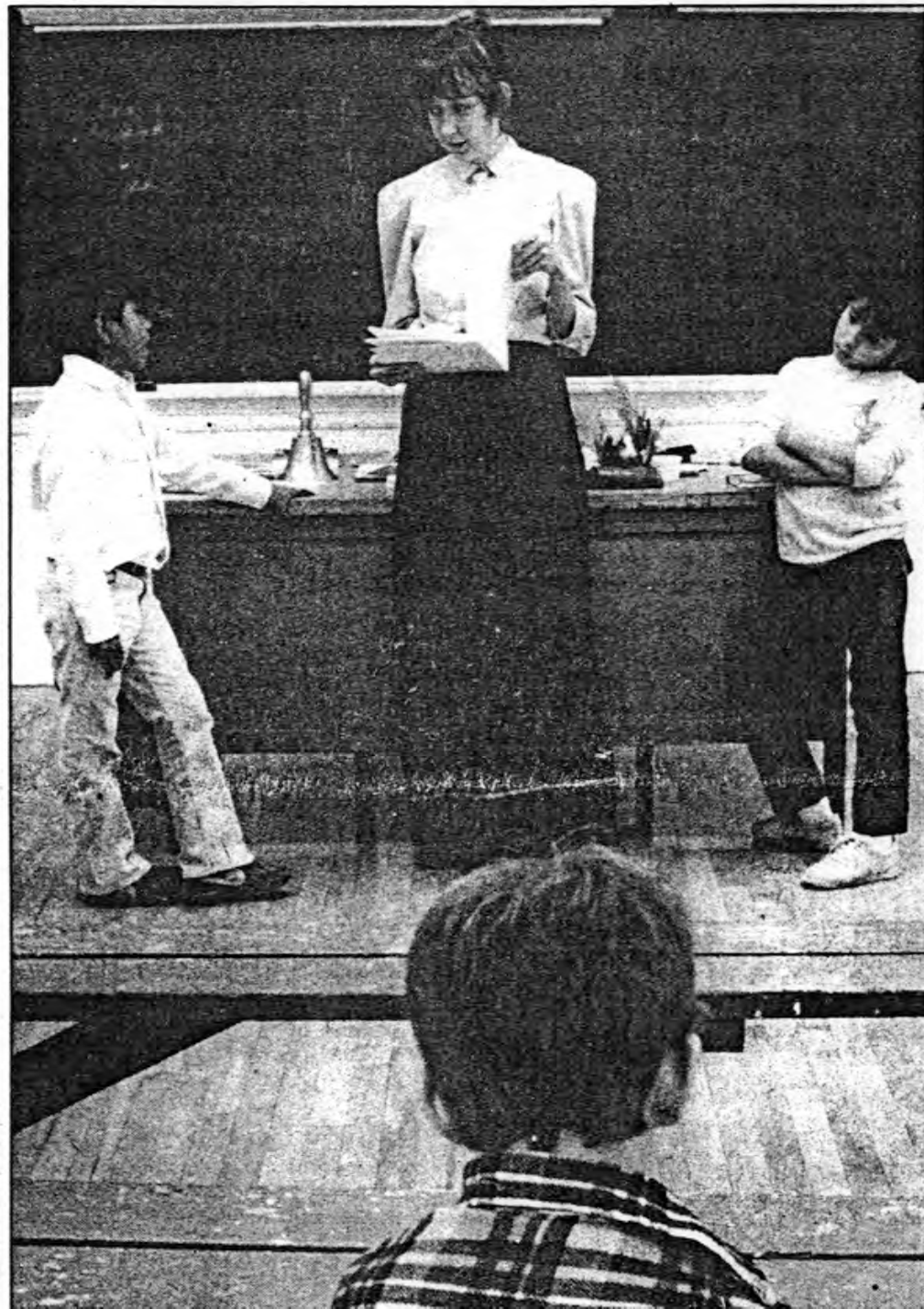
"Our main goal is to give kids some sense of history for the area and what it was like in a one-room schoolhouse," Ms. Judd says.

The students begin by practicing their handwriting on slates. In the midst of the lesson, a neighborhood dog saunters in and plops down next to Ms. Judd's desk.

Next, Ms. Judd introduces the children to the local fauna, passing around a tarantula specimen.



Students practice writing on slates.



'They were making pumpkin soup and mock turtle soup in 1910'

## Campbell's JW has a new soup, nacho cheese, because everybody loves nachos.'

Despite the leap back in time, one student cannot resist the lure of modern technology. As the creature is passed to him, he whips out an instamatic camera and snaps a shot, grinning a self-satisfied smile.

Teacher's aide Jerry Palculich next gives the children a taste of 1910 prices.

"How many of you eat cereal?" Mrs. Palculich asks the class. "In 1910 you could go buy Grape Nuts for 15 cents."

Gasps flow through the class.

And Mrs. Palculich explains that newspapers cost a mere penny.

"How many of you like Campbell's soup?" Mrs. Palculich inquires. "They were making pumpkin soup and mock turtle soup in 1910. Campbell's now has a new soup, nacho cheese, because everybody loves nachos."

During recess, Ms. Judd explains that she teaches children about local Indians during the second day of the program. The students make cakes from acorn paste and also try their hands at pottery.

She tells them that local Indian tribes such as the Luisenos and Cupenos inhabited the De Luz community, north of Fallbrook, but never the downtown portion of Fallbrook.

"Fallbrook was a place of bad spirits for Indians," says Ms. Judd.

Asked if she dresses in Native American garb on the second day of the class, a smile crosses her face.

"Indians wore very little clothing, it wouldn't be appropriate for me to dress the way they did."

Ms. Judd grabs the hand bell from her desk and calls the children in from recess.

It's now time for the students to recite from their McGuffey Readers. The books, which contain lessons in spelling, handwriting and math, were a staple text of the 19-century and early 20th-century schoolhouse.

"They also taught boys and girls to be honest, how to be a good citizen and how to take care of oneself as well as others," Ms.

The old McGuffey Reader is used.



Students recite 19th century text.

Judd tells the class.

Today's story, "Susie Sunbeam," recited by members of the class, tells the tale of a girl who comforts a poor child being teased by the neighbors.

"Susie brought the girl into the house and she cheered her up with kind words and gave her a nice dress and a pair of shoes," the story concludes. "This brought real joy and gladness to the poor child and she too thought that Susie was rightly called Sunbeam."

Ms. Judd explains that in 1910, most students did not attend school past the eighth grade since many were expected to go back to work on their parents' farms. The parents considered their children's education complete when they had learned to read, write and do arithmetic.

"My grandmother only completed the



Donna Cosentino/The Times-Advocate

Teacher Michelle Franks' third-grade class from Maie Ellis School in Fallbrook recently took part in a two-day "good ol' golden rule days" program.

third grade," Ms. Judd says. "She had to go back to work on her parents' tobacco farm in Kentucky."

"Then, not that many people went to college," she adds. "Now education is becoming more and more important."

This day's lessons also include a brief introduction to Halley's Comet, which will making a return trip close to the earth this year.

Ms. Judd explains to the 8- and 9-year-olds that they will be in their eighties when the comet is next visible in the year 2062.

"You'll probably be two-timers," she tells them. "You'll be able to see the comet two times in your life, which is rare."

Square dancing is the final event of the day.

Says Ms. Judd: "To me, the funniest thing is that all the students hate the the

idea of square dancing, the idea of holding a boy's hand."

Indeed, as a boy walks back into the room after lunch, he nervously tells his friend, "I don't like square dancing."

Asked why, he says, "Because I don't know how to do it."

The students cover their faces in embarrassment as they are assigned partners. The music begins and the children tentatively bow to their square mates.

Soon, they are giggling and dancing as the caller sings: "Now circle 'round the other way back. Let those feet go wickety-wack."

The boy who hates square dancing is now smiling as he skips around in a circle, holding the hands of girls on either side of him.

Some things never change.

# Students transported to 1914 at DeLuz School

Oct. 87

By HILARY SMITH  
and LEE REEDER  
Enterprise staff

Thursday, Oct. 29, 1987

The Enterprise C-15

The difference between simply learning and actually living a subject is felt by the hundreds of third and fifth graders rotated each year through the DeLuz Ecology Center.

The center is on the site of the 60-year-old DeLuz schoolhouse and 120 acres of adjacent land. Prior to the DeLuz ecology program, started in 1984, the schoolhouse had not been used since 1968.

There are two programs at the center. Between September and December, each third grade class in the district attends the school for two days. From January to June, the four-day environmental education program for fifth graders is in session.

On Monday of last week, third graders from Maie Ellis Elementary School stepped off a 1980's bus and were transported back in time to 1914, the year the DeLuz Post Office (which still exists on the property) was built.

## Indian lore

They immediately began learning history, Indian lore, and traditional school subjects, seeing through the eyes of early 20th century students.

During the current Indian and Living History program for third-graders, the children are met by teacher Jackie Judd and her assistant, Gina Palculich, wearing clothing from 1914. After helping raise the flag - during which time they are told the difference between this flag and

flag of 1914 - and before entering the one-room schoolhouse, the children get their first lesson on the changes that have been made through time.

Judd gathered the children together before the first day of the third grade program and began: "In 1914 there were girls' playgrounds and boys' playgrounds, and girls' lines and boys' lines, so we'll make two lines: a boys' line and a girls' line."

Children then filed in to find only benches waiting, and were told that the seats require that they sit straighter and face forward.

The President's picture hangs on the wall of the one-room schoolhouse, but Ronald Reagan is nowhere to be seen. The President these children see when they look up is the serious, bespectacled face of Woodrow Wilson.

After assigning chores to each student and taking attendance, Judd explained that in the 1914 classroom, many of the children worked very hard before each school day began. "Megan might have had to clean out the family's horse stalls, and Jamie might have had to slop the pigs," Judd said, pointing to certain students. "You were sitting next to someone who had been working on a farm and maybe didn't smell too good."

During attendance Judd remarked that many names on the list - such as Megan, Joshua and Melissa - were popular turn-of-the-century names which have seen a recent resurgence.

She then explained that some of the seats might have been temporarily or permanently vacant in a 1914 classroom, because some children had to work to help support their families. The statement turned into a graphic lesson on child labor laws that could be both felt and heard. Children leaving Judd's class, instead of having a hazy description of the court battles and legislative maneuvering involved, now know the topic as "the reason I'm able to go to school."

## McGuffey's reader

English and reading are taught using, "McGuffey's Second Eclectic Reader," the recognized children's primer of the era. Judd explained the scholastic progression and the lack of school facilities of that time. She told the story of a man still living in the local area who had to live for four years in Santa Ana with his uncle so that he could attend high school.

While taking attendance she told brief historical accounts of early Fallbrook residents who were related to certain children in the classroom. One of the children in that class is a great-grandson of a man who helped build the DeLuz post office.

Mathematics instruction intertwined with history during the first day, as children used 1914 prices in solving arithmetic problems. Later, the books and pencil were set aside and the children learned the fundamentals of square dancing.

"On the second day of the third grade program, we go farther back in time and the students learn about the Luiseno and Juaneno Indians of the area; about their culture, and a little about the language," said Judd. "They make sandpaintings...they make 'weewish' (acorn mush) with the grinding stones. They make it with the local acorns and metates (200-year-old grinding stones) that the Indians left on the property. And we do Indian songs and games.

"Most kids have no concept of the California Indians. We talk in the program specifically about Indians that live right in this area. Kids seem to be familiar with the Plains Indians and the Indians of the southwest, and they know a little bit about the east coast Indians."

She added that the children often do not realize the difference between those Indians and the local groups, and that there were far more Indians

### Not warlike

"California Indians weren't that exciting because they

weren't warring," Judd said. "They were semi-nomadic, in that they traveled between the oaks and the mountains."

Acorns were harvested between September and November. They were dried and shelled, Judd said, explaining as she does to her students, before the meat was ground and then washed time and again to release the tannic acid, which can give people bad stomach aches.

Judd said, "It sort of ends up preserving your insides; they used to use tannic acid to embalm. They would either make cakes, or they would put boiling water on it and make a mush, which is really bland. It smells like graham crackers, but it doesn't taste like graham crackers.

"You've just got to make sure you get all the tannic acid out. One suggestion made to me was to put the powder in a sock and to put it in your toilet tank for two weeks and all the flushing will wash out the acid eventually." She added, laughing, "The top part of the tank, not the bottom part of the tank!"

Because of that time-consuming process, the children do not presently eat the acorn mush.

The fifth grade program, which runs from January to June, also teaches history, but deals more with natural history and the environment. The program is an awakening for many of the students, according to Judd.

Non-traditional education in natural history and geology is given both in the classroom and on hiking trails. "The kids are always asking for more hiking," Judd said. For the last several years, crews from the California Conservation Corps and Rainbow Conservation Camp inmates have cut about four miles of hiking trails for the center.

Two of the four days are devoted to learning about the ecosystems of streamside and chaparral habitats along the trails.

Much of the geology work happens on property owned by Burt Lawrence, who has allowed the center to use his land across the street for years.

One of the high points of geology is gold-panning. There is a limited history of prospecting in the local area, and that history is told while they are learning panning techniques.

Do the children ever find gold? Judd answered, "Don't ever say they don't! They won't pan for it anymore.

"There were supposedly some abandoned gold mines in the area. The kids learn a little bit about looking for color and how the panners did it. They take rock hammers and study the geology, and go back to class to study mineral identification."

### Owl droppings

The children also dissect sterilized owl droppings, which contain skeletons of rats, shrews, mice, voles and birds.

"It's amazing how few of these school-age kids have been out to DeLuz. Most have no concept of what California was like before today," said Judd. "I've found that students here have not been much in touch with their own environment.

"I feel that my main purpose is to give students an understanding of their own environment; I can be a bridge between the students' just looking at plants, animals, and trees, and the students' really having a better understanding and appreciation of them.

"The more they know, the more they feel about it, and the more responsible they're going to feel about it."

A group of teachers, administrators and local citizens worked for close to 13 years to establish the program.

Regarding the DeLuz program before her arrival, Judd said, "It was never constant. A lot of teachers didn't want to go out

there because of rattlesnakes and not knowing the trails. It wasn't really organized."

The uniqueness of the program and the varied responsibilities of Judd and Palculich were noted by the governing board of the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District. After board member Rebecca Daze went out and watched the program, she urged board members to rewrite Palculich's teacher's aide job title, which Daze feels is grossly understated.

Daze said that Palculich braves the possibility of rattlesnake bites and other dangers on the trails and added, "She works like a beaver in the classroom." The elementary board will discuss the matter at a future meeting.

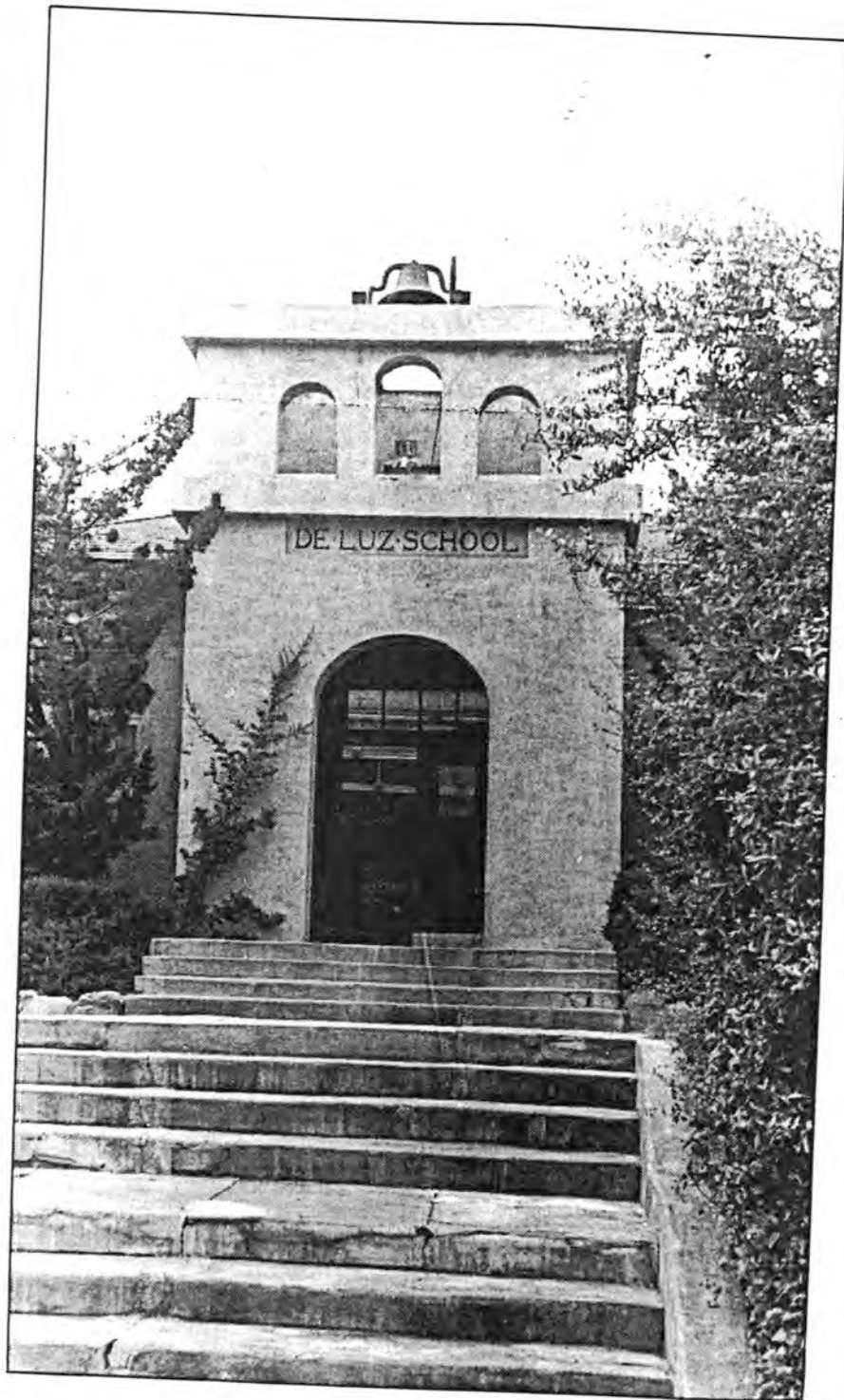
### Sense of history

Judd summed up a few of the reasons behind the program. She said, "Kids don't have a sense of history. They don't know where they came from. They don't realize the impact that man does have on the environment. Once things disappear, they are gone."



48 STARS — Teacher's aide Gina Palculich and custodian Robert George, help Maie Ellis Elementary school third graders raise the flags at the DeLuz

School, as Teacher Jackie Judd (behind flag) explains to students the difference between today's national flag and the flag of 1914.



**OLD FAITHFUL** — The 60-year-old DeLuz School seems content to once again have children filling its hall and learning the old ways in an old way.

# Outdoor classroom

## Youngsters learn by doing at De Luz Ecology Center

By **CHRISTY DALER**

*Staff Writer*

FALLBROOK — Adam Pena waded through De Luz Creek, swirling a small insect net through the shallow water.

One of Pena's catches was a dragonfly larva — used to illustrate the mid-stage cycle of the insect's life.

The dragonfly larva, teacher Katy Duffin explained, suck in water through their mouths and propel it out the other end, sending them through the water "kind of like jet propulsion."

But instead of just reading about the creature in a book, youngsters like Pena, participating in the De Luz Ecology Center's classes, are able to have hands-on experience.

Before going out into the stream to catch insect specimens, the kids are provided with background information about insect life cycles. Sometimes stuffed toys — which can be transformed, for example, from a caterpillar into a butterfly — are used to help with the lessons.

The students then collect and identify insects, noting where they are found and what they eat.

The ecology center, in a one-room

schoolhouse and adjoining land approximately 11 miles outside of Fallbrook, is owned and operated by the Fallbrook elementary school district. The former De Luz School was donated to the district and later opened as the ecology center.

District fifth-graders are able to experience four days of learning without textbooks — trooping through the woods on nature hikes to learn about ecology, panning for "gold" in the hills to learn about minerals, and capturing insects to further their study of nature.

Third-graders also visit the ecology center for history, which is brought to life in the form of Indian music and the use of slate chalkboards.

The ecology center recently has been the focus of renewed interest as the proposed beneficiary of monies generated through a rock quarry planned for Rosemary's Mountain on the Pankey Ranch.

Hal Jensen, owner of Palomar Aggregates, Inc., which has proposed the quarry, has offered to donate a nickel per ton of aggregate removed from the site.

► See Ecology, Page E-2



# Ecology

► From Page E-1

The project is expected to generate an estimated \$1.2 million over the life of the quarry. But while district trustees have accepted Jensen's offer of donations being earmarked for the ecology center, they have not publicly endorsed the project.

The program is currently funded through state lottery proceeds.

On the way to a stream to collect riparian insects — those that spend at least a portion of their life cycle in the water — for further study, Duffin points out a rotting log along the side of the trail.

Students can see the damage caused by termites, as well as small lines carved by insects known as "engraving beetles."

When they encountered signs of erosion beneath a tree beside the unpaved roadway, students also were able to offer suggestions how such erosion could be avoided.

Once they reached the stream, students were advised to act only as observers and to leave things as undisturbed as possible.

Students were allowed to take critters besides insects — such as tadpoles, minnows or frogs, out of the water momentarily to study them, but were advised to gently return them to their homes.

"Down in the creek we are visitors, but some creatures happen to live there," Duffin warned.

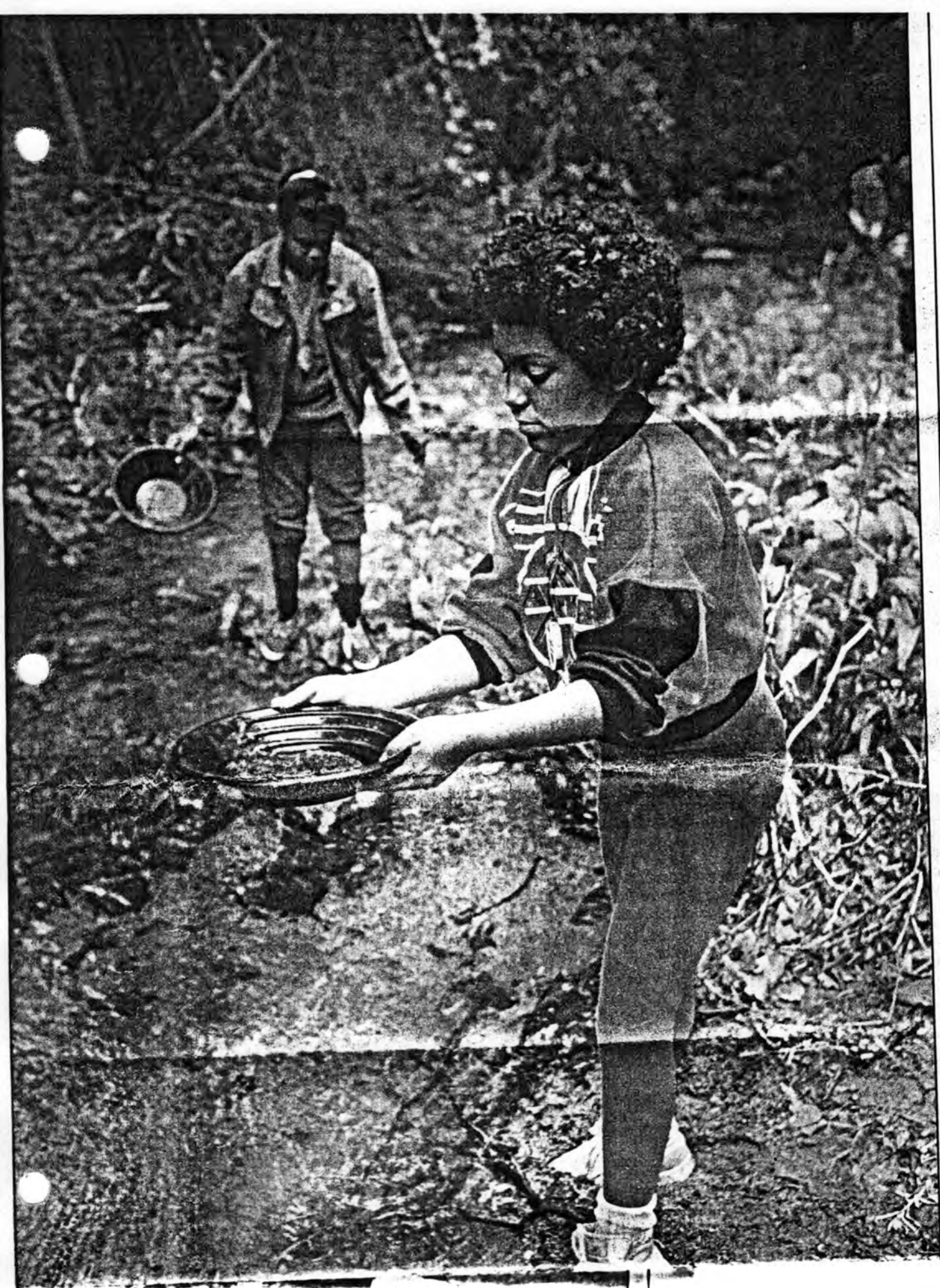
Without the use of textbooks or other classroom aids, how well do the students learn?

"Since the entire program is learning-by-doing, I guess the retention would be very high," Duffin said. "While they're here, all the senses are used. And I think for that reason, the kids just love it.

"A lot of them have never even stopped to look into the water."

The setting, Duffin says, "is a teacher's dream.

"The kids are just so naturally motivated. They come back the next day saying 'What are we going to do today?'"





# DeLuz Ecology Center TODAY

Fallbrook Citizens for the DeLuz Ecology Center

The children are the same, but their giggles and grins give only an inkling of the fun they're having--at school. Yes, school!

But it's a different kind of school. It's school at the DeLuz Ecology Center for just a few days at a time for all third and fifth graders in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District. Their teachers' dramatic presentations and the surrounding 120 acres of wooded hillsides and creeklands are their only textbooks.

Based in the old one-room DeLuz Schoolhouse some 12 miles northeast of Fallbrook, the outdoor education program brings textbooks alive, according to Katy Duffin, teacher and coordinator of the program.

"This program allows the students to learn by doing, using all their senses," Duffin says. "A child once told me, 'I hate science' as he waded in the creek intently searching for insects to capture and identify. When I explained to him that what he was doing *was* science, he replied, 'Yeah, but this is *fun* science.' That alone says a lot about our program."

And fun it is. Probably for the first time in their lives, Fallbrook's third graders can identify with their grandparents' stories of school "back then."

Upon entering the one-room schoolhouse, the children are greeted by strict Mrs. Duffin and teaching assistant, Jerry Palculich, both clad in period clothing. The year is 1926. The children are invited to sit--on wood benches, of course. And on occasion, they are reminded that they must sit up straight.

That's probably the only painful part of the third graders' two-day experience at

DeLuz. The rest of the time is spent actually living history--actually feeling what school would be like in 1926 and learning about the land the Indians called home.

Their day progresses from a flag-raising ceremony to poetry reading to lessons in the McGuffey Reader. Of course, there's the cursive writing and math exercises on slates. And no 1926 third grader's school day would be complete without a spelling bee and a round or two of square dancing.

On the second day, the children experience life as the Indians knew it. They learn about Indian music. They experiment with Indian instruments, prepare Weewish, an Indian bread-like food made from acorns, and make Indian sand paintings as a keepsake of their time at DeLuz. Then they hike the same trails the Indians once roamed, learning about the area's plants and critters.

*(Please turn page)*



Above, fifth grade teacher Diane Lilja assists Sarah Guyer with the "Who Lives Here?" contest.



DeLuz Ecology Center teacher Katy Duffin helps fifth graders (from left) James Ferguson, Jon Dotson, Kevin Strikwerda and Ryan Williams identify insects.

# DeLuz inspires students to learn

(Continued from front page)

This sampling of yesterday makes a lasting impression today with Fallbrook's third graders. Comments like "I wish I could do it all over again" and "this was the best field trip ever" probably best describe the program's success.

With fond memories, these same third graders return two years later to their DeLuz school. This time, they participate in a 1989 study of ecology and conservation.

Why? Because the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District board is committed to the conservation of natural resources.

"We are fortunate to have here one of the last undisturbed areas in the state," says Bill Diedrich, District superintendent.

"It only makes sense to include our children in a study of these natural resources."

And a *study* it is. The children hike--and hike--and hike--the surrounding trails, learning as they go.

They learn how animals adapt to their environment. They learn about animal/plant adaptations and gain an understanding of the rain cycle, photosynthesis, erosion and the food chain.

Dissecting owl pellets, panning for gold and identifying the various minerals are some of their favorite activities. And no child's experience in the wilds would be complete without collecting and identifying those critters called insects.

Students also learn about ecology and how they can help preserve their natural resources. "We teach the children that changing personal attitudes is more important than developing new technologies for environmental control," Mrs. Duffin explains. "Since the earth's resources are finite and limited, ecology is a science that no person can afford to ignore. The children come to understand this through their experiences here."

They learn that they can do their part by maintaining bird feeding stations, confining their dogs at night, attaching bells to their cats, refusing to buy products made from rare animals and writing their legislators.

For most students, the DeLuz experience is fun, exciting and unforgettable. It gives them an appreciation of this land--of life itself. And for some, it's the first time they have enjoyed learning. One journal entry reads: "It was

"It was the first time I had lots of fun learning."

the first time I had lots of fun learning."

Another reads: "I had the time of my life." "This week a student wanted to share her latest discovery with me while we were doing riparian studies," Mrs. Duffin recalls. "When she called me over, she explained that she thought she had found an egg sac from a snail. She said, 'Look! It's just like a bubble, but it won't pop!' How could she ever learn *that* from a book?"



From top, (left to right) teacher Katy Duffin and Troy Brooks identify some of nature's critters. Jackie Parker and Alicia Franco hurry to name minerals in class contest. Teaching assistant Jerry Palculich checks the minerals identified by Drew Richards. Below, Maria Navarrete and Katie Hoffman use a stereoscope to better view some insects.





Staff Photo / Don Boomer

Zulema Valdez, left, and Nora Perez attempt to net insects in a small mountain stream at the De Luz Ecology Center last week.

## Kids learn ecology firsthand at De Luz

By Ken Layne  
Staff Writer

DE LUZ — A dozen laughing kids are trampling through mud and water, digging up bugs from a small mountain stream.

One 11-year-old girl dangles a swollen, dead potato bug for her friends to see. The kids laugh, then go back to chasing each other through the mud.

Just another school day at the De Luz Ecology Center.

Fallbrook third- and fifth-graders spend a week of their school year at the remote schoolhouse, coming back and forth from town each day by bus. At the center, students get a close-up look at nature and some lessons in protecting the environment.

The center is located 12 miles north of Fallbrook on De Luz Murietta Road and surrounded by 120 acres of chaparral, oak woodland and riparian environments. Everything from gold panning to playing with pet turtles and rats makes up the curriculum.

On a warm day last week, a class of fifth-graders from La Paloma elementary school spent a half-hour getting briefed on water insects. The group then hiked through an oak-shaded trail to the stream, where nets and bowls were handed out. Each "team" of three students had a bowl to fill with living specimens of riparian insects.

Nicole Waage, 11, proudly showed her catch.

"I've got two bugs," she said. "This one looks like a tick. Do ticks swim?"

Across the creek, Brian Arendt, also 11, caught a young frog. The kids had been told earlier to only catch insects, no frogs or tadpoles.

"Whoa!" Arendt yelled. "Look at this cool frog. Too bad we can't keep him."

Brian Arendt headed for the other side of the stream, where his friends and teacher Jean Dooley were doing a little better.

"We're the Dooley class," Brian said, "And we're looking for a few good bugs."

This group was made up of mostly Spanish speakers, so the instructions were given by Dooley bilingually. But the language bar-

rier didn't stop the students from sharing in the delight of their favorite catches, the plentiful dead potato bugs. Nods of approval and thumbs-up signals were exchanged each time one of the gruesome corpses was found.

Dooley explained to Waage that horsehair worms, insect parasites, had entered the bugs' systems through the creek water. The thin, white worms eventually grew large enough to kill the host bug.

In the end, the catch was made up mostly of water beetles, water striders and several smaller bugs that would be identified later in class.

Meanwhile, just up the stream,

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## De Luz

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► From Page B-1

another dozen La Paloma fifth graders were with center director Katy Duffin. Their project had a capitalist bent to it: panning for gold. With special pans and small jars to hold the jackpot, students stood ankle-deep in the stream, sifting through countless pans of sand. The idea was to find magnetite, a dark mineral in which gold can often be found.

"See, you keep running water over it 'till you just have what's dark," Robby Baldwin explained.

Hermes Castro, 10, held up his small jar, almost filled with magnetite. "See how much I got?" he asked. Hermes agreed with Baldwin that gold panning was more fun than school.

Duffin, who commutes from Fallbrook to the center with her dog, Rocky, said the chances of finding much gold were slim. Duffin has taught at the De Luz center for two years.

At the end of the streamside activities, the students hiked back to the center, with the good-natured Rocky running alongside. Back at the center's single classroom, wet shoes and socks were set out to dry before lunch.

The De Luz Ecology Center is the most recent incarnation of the old De Luz school, built in 1926. Outside the school is the famed De Luz post office, the 8-by-8-foot wooden hut that once served the area's mail needs. It was closed in 1955; residents now get daily mail delivery.

The school was closed in 1968 because it did not meet earthquake standards, but was later allowed to be used as the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District's ecology center. There are plans to expand the center, including one to make the center a camp where students would stay for the entire week.

The building's interior is homey and comfortable, with old wooden floors and a myriad of displays and pets lining the walls. There is a pair of friendly rats, Noel and Holly, as well as a trio of unnamed box turtles. Two iguanas, Tappy and PeeWee, occupy a large aquarium.

Stuffed animals (all ridiculously bad examples of Tijuana taxidermy seized by U.S. Customs officials and donated to the center) line the walls, including a grey fox, coyote, barn owl, mule deer, bobcat and a raccoon wearing a ski cap.

Posters encourage kids to "Take only memories, leave only footprints," and to practice safety and care in forests.

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SALLY LARSEN/Staff photographer

Third-grader Jennifer Leonard grinds acorns with a mano stone as teacher Katie Duffin offers encouragement.

## Learning ecology in a one-room schoolhouse

■ **ENVIRONMENT:** *The old De Luz School has been reborn as a laboratory of our surroundings*

SALLY LARSEN/Staff writer

In a one-room school 12 miles north of Fallbrook amid 127 acres of undeveloped countryside, Fallbrook elementary school students learn about their environment and the past.

There the old and the new come together and form a learning program that is lived by its students.

The De Luz Ecology Center, once the De Luz School, is the site of the Fallbrook Elementary School District's Environmental Education Program. The program goals as outlined by the district are to "assist students in developing awareness, knowledge, skills and responsible action concerning plants, animals and the environment."

Third- and fifth-grade students from Fallbrook schools, Camp Pendleton, and the hand-dipped class from La Palma school are the participants in the Ecology Center's hands-on learning experience.

Making the program work are teachers Katie Duffin and Cathy Leonard, aided by Jerry Maluclich (who has been with the program since its beginning in 1984). Custodian Robert George does more than just keep the grounds spotless, bringing in slices he finds from the historic past to enrich classroom studies.

Together the teachers guide the students as they explore and learn. "It happens so naturally, a process of giving knowledge," says Katie Duffin, that "the kids don't really realize they are learning."

Recess, normally a coveted laytime for students, finds many returning to the classroom for more learning. An orienta-

tion center, to prepare them for the experiences ahead.

Even so, the students are still amazed by their first glimpse of

the room, and the Gila monster's cage another.

Third-grade classes are offered a one-day study course with a choice of two subjects. A 1926 classroom living lesson in history, or an ecology study.

Students begin the history study as soon as they enter the school. They become part of the past, and pack away their lunches in the cloak room before taking their places on the benches. Classroom rules are reviewed and chores are laid out by the teacher, who is dressed in keeping with the era.

The morning poem is read with emphasis on good posture, proper pronunciation and articulation. The text book is a McGuffey Reader and is passed out by the bench monitors.

The day passes quickly, with lessons in math, music, and cursive handwriting practiced on slates. Soon it's time for the bus

to the oaks, where the students sit on the leafy ground and re-enact the life of Luiseno Indian boys and girls.

In the classroom, acorns are ground to make *weewish*, a meal that was the mainstay of the In-

dian diet. Using a *metate* and *mano*, a new understanding and feeling for the past is gained, as the third-graders labor to produce meal from the acorns.

Fifth-graders are given a three-day program. Many returning third-graders liked their

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## ECOLOGY: One-room schoolhouse

Continued from Page 5

third-grade experience so much that they want to repeat it. They are soon caught up in the expanded fifth-grade study and eager for new experiences.

The fifth-grade curriculum is

lengthy, and includes the study of climate, habitat, fire ecology, oak woodland and riparian ecology, geology, entomology and animals.

As part of the geology study, students take miners' picks and

August 23, 1990

gold pans and head out for a nearby stream. Panning for gold turns up mica and other geological finds, as well as a smattering of real gold. While students work their pans in the water, the teacher observes their finds and casually identifies them by scientific names. The students, intent on their search, absorb the

new knowledge.

Along the center's trails, the scat from an owl is found, brought back to the classroom, and dissected. From this examination students determine the owl's diet.

Students are impressed with their novel learning experiences, and take time to say so. Among the many notes written to the staff at De Luz is this one from a fifth-grader: "I liked the hikes, insecting and all the other activities, on Friday I liked the fruit salad, hot dogs, chips and the

long hike."

Another student said it with a smile, his first, when he spotted a turtle. He is a person not easily reached by the world around him, because he is non-verbal and severely handicapped.

In a pleasant and memorable way the Fallbrook Elementary School District's Environmental Program is carried out by an enthusiastic and caring staff. In a relaxed, open setting, the students gain a new point of view, regarding their human habitat, earth.



Dick O'Brien/Enterprise

MISSION RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT Coordinator Judy Mitchell (left) presents the Award of Merit to DeLuz Ecology Center staff members Gina Palculich, Scott Gordon and Gene Giles.

## Ecology Center receives award

The outdoor classroom program at the DeLuz Ecology Center was presented an Award of Merit from the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Good-year Corporation by the Mission Resource Conservation District.

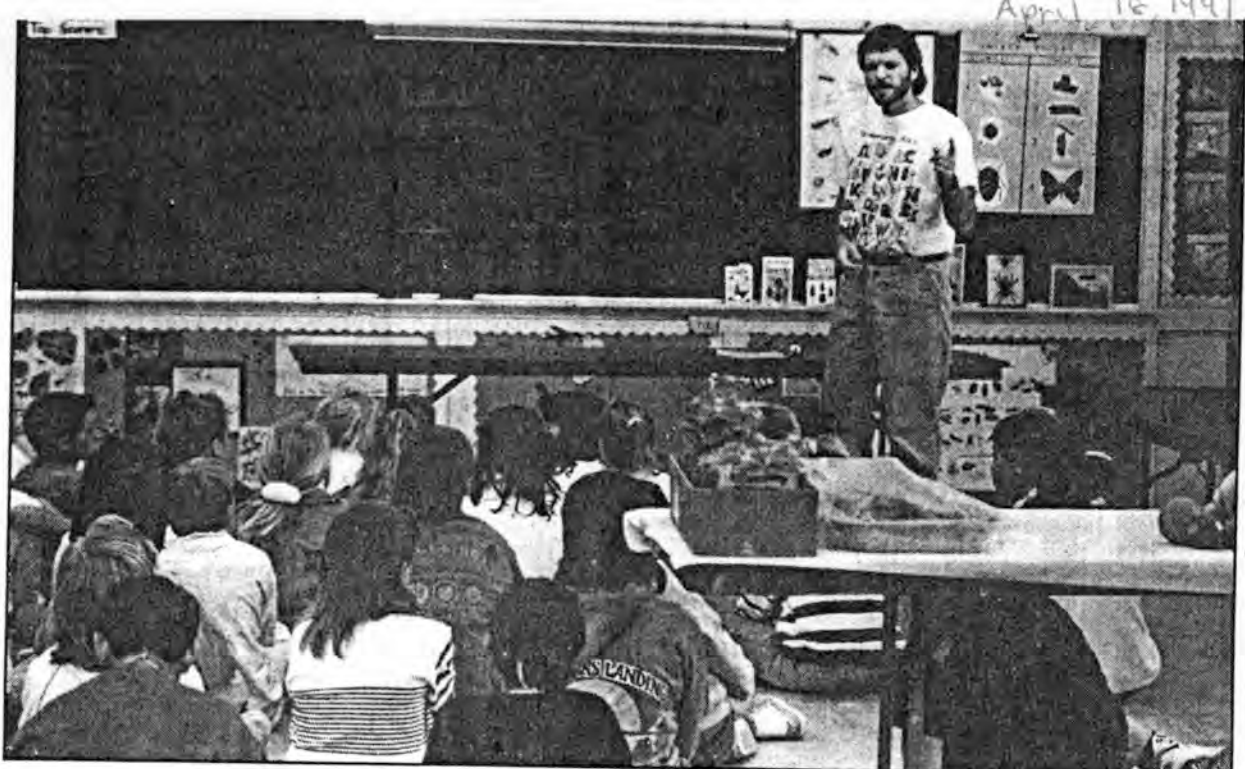
This national award was presented to Dr. William Diedrich, Fallbrook Union Elementary School Board District superintendent; Warren Butcher, president of the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District Board of Trustees; and to the DeLuz Ecology center staff, Scott Gordon and Gina Palculich. The Award of Merit is presented in each state to groups of individuals who have achieved outstanding accomplishments in resourceconservation.

At the presentation, Judy Mitchell, District Coordinator for Mission Resource Conservation District, stated that, "the hands-on program provided by the center offers Fall-

brook elementary students a unique opportunity to learn about ecology and how they can help preserve their natural resources. The program is rec-

ognized for its excellence on the state and national level and is a real credit to the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District."





Debbie Murphy/Enterprise

INSTRUCTOR SCOTT GORDON reviews his class' quiz results.

## Ecology Center on endangered list

By DEBBIE MURPHY  
Staff Writer

The DeLuz Ecology Center, along with 15 other school programs in section two of the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District budget, may face extinction.

The total dollars needed to keep the programs at their present level are \$1,118,410, according to Jennifer Jeffries, recently named district superintendent. "We've cut \$644,000 so far and need to reduce the budget another \$375,000," she said. These cuts will come out of the section two extracurricular programs.

"We're cutting right to the cuticle," said Jeffries, who hopes the programs can be saved, perhaps in a different format.

*Fallbrook High sophomore Dan Doherty remembers the "food chain" experiment at the Center when he was a fifth-grader. "We all took the part of a species in the food chain. The lowest guy was mold, but mold also feeds on the bigger species, so he was on top too. After we had formed a web, all connected by string, the teacher took out the species who were now extinct. The whole web collapsed."*

The Ecology Center, located 10 miles northwest of Fallbrook, includes the original DeLuz one-room school house, the historic, mobile DeLuz post office, and 127 acres of back country. The building was constructed in 1926 and the site donated to FUESD in 1968. The present program was developed in 1984 by the late Jacqueline Judd.

Jerry Palculich, now a teaching assistant with the program, has been involved in the Ecology Center from the beginning. He has a strong sense of the history of the area, from the Indian villages that clustered under the massive live oaks, to the railroad washouts in the canyon in the 1880s and early 1900s.

The operating budget for the Center is \$98,900 annually. According to Jeffries this includes staff (one certified instructor, an assistant and a custodian), supplies, maintenance and transportation. "It's hard to figure out how the program can be cut and still keep its value," said Scott Gordon, the program's instructor.

Gordon, who has a BS in outdoor education from Humboldt State, identifies plant life,

insect habits, and animal habits. He and Palculich split the class in half for the activities. "These kids are so containable when they come here," said Gordon, who transferred to DeLuz from San Onofre two months ago. "Motivation is never a problem. A lot of kids who don't shine in the classroom come out here and they're successful. They get a whole new sense of peer respect."

The greatest danger Gordon sees in losing the program is that the Center "really shows how things relate to the environment. It's one thing to learn about ecology, they can see it when they come to DeLuz. And that knowledge is important if we're going to respect our ecosystem."

*Gordon stops on the narrow path up the side of a canyon and points to four yucca rising above the chapparal. "The Indians were natural conservationists," he explains. "They would see those four yucca and only use two, saving the others to spread their seed and be harvested the next year. We need to learn from the Indians and not use up the resources we're dependent on."*

# It's a fine place for yucca, acorn caps and kids on a hike

## Ecology Center takes classes outside for a closeup look at the environment

By Tim Mayer  
Special to The San Diego Union

Under a spring sky patchy with rain clouds, 27 youngsters chatter happily as they dig out their lunches from paper bags around a long, wooden table outside a one-room schoolhouse.

They have just returned from an hourlong walk along the trails through brush and trees on the 128-acre De Luz Ecology Center just north of Fallbrook, and they are eager to talk about it.

"We found two yucca plants," exclaims Emmanuel Enriquez, 11.

"I found a claw," says Max Peukert, 10, handing a bit of white bone to Ecology Center teacher Scott Gordon.

"It looks like a claw, doesn't it?" Gordon agrees, but then explains it is actually an entire lower jaw bone of some type of tiny rodent, pointing out needle-fine teeth to the students.

"I found something," chips in Kenny Freeman, 11. "Acorn caps. They were really old and fragile."

"From what kind of oak tree?" quizzes Gordon.

The youngsters, also accompanied by teacher Caroline Gunner, are fifth graders from La Paloma Elementary School in Fallbrook. They are out of the classroom for a four-day program at the Ecology Center sponsored by the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District.

About 1,400 fifth and third graders visit the center each year, says Gordon. The fifth graders concentrate on learning about the environment, while third graders often focus on history, with teachers dressing up in costume to show them what school was like years ago in the historic one-room school built in 1926.

The concrete block building served

the first through eighth grade students of De Luz Valley until 1968 when it closed because it did not meet earthquake standards and was taken over by the Fallbrook district.

Now its tables and walls are filled to overflowing with exhibits of local rocks, animals, birds and flowers.

After lunch, the students line up with their leftovers to pass by a row of green buckets as the bearded Gordon — wearing a colorful "Earth Day is Every Day" T-shirt — helps them sort their glass, clean paper and aluminum foil into the buckets for recycling. Leftover food goes into the compost heap.

Gunner takes time for her lunch and to talk about the center while the lesson in recycling goes on.

"I love it," says Gunner, who has taught in the district for nine years. "It's a good break for the kids from the normal, daily grind and it's all hands-on. The kids get a good feeling for the outdoors and the environment."

Gunner says many of the children seldom have a chance to get out and roam around in nature. "It is the highlight of the year, something the kids look forward to."

Recycling duties over, Gordon stops long enough to explain that the center "for me, is kind of an ideal job."

He majored in outdoor education at Humboldt State University before joining the Fallbrook district, teaching fifth grade at San Onofre Elementary for 2½ years. He was selected to teach at the Ecology Center about two months ago.

"It is a fantastic program," says Gordon.

During the second day of the program students will split into two groups. One will pan for gold by nearby De Luz Creek and look for different kinds of rocks for a lesson



The San Diego Union/Tony Doubek

De Luz Ecology Center teacher Scott Gordon examines owl pellets with Oscar Spinoza.

in geology, and the other group will search for interesting insects.

The third day, the groups will switch places, and on the fourth day the entire class will take a longer version of the first day's hike, learning about local birds and animals and plants.

The excited voices of several children gather around three box turtles — some of the classroom pet animals — draw his attention.

"Pardon me," he says. "I've got to deal with some turtle molesters."

The boys and girls are frustrated because one is locked up in its shell and won't come out.

"This is a Ninja Turtle," says one boy.

"Turtles are cold-blooded," Gordon tells them patiently. "Let him heat

up for a while and he'll come out."

The students later adjourn inside to dissect owl "pellets" — the undigestible remains of owl dinners.

Emma DeLaTorre, 12, finds a bundle of tiny bones when she opens up her pellet of feathers and fur.

Marcela Gonzalez, 11, comes up with the top of a rodent's skull.

"Look at this, a face," says Faviola Villarreal, 10.

"Oh, gross," responds Alma Rueda, 11.

Class over, the children gather on the steps to await the bus that will take them back to their regular school.

"Tomorrow," Gordon cautions the students. "I want you to bring an extra pair of shoes and dry socks. It can get slippery around the creek."



Gordon explains a project to students.

## Center for ecology is endangered

By Tim Mayer  
Staff Writer

**FALLBROOK** — The state budget crisis that already has forced the elementary school district here to cut more than \$1 million in spending on everything from books to after-

school sports might claim another victim: the De Luz Ecology Center.

Jennifer Jeffries, assistant superintendent of educational services, said more cuts in existing school programs might have to be made within the next two to three weeks, and that might mean the district's much-praised Ecology Center will be closed down.

About 1,400 students a year visit the center — an exhibits and classroom building and 128 acres of brush and trees crisscrossed with nature trails — to learn about local wildlife

# De Luz: State budget woes put Ecology Center on endangered list

Continued from Page 1  
and the environment.

The Fallbrook Union Elementary School District estimates that eliminating the De Luz program would save about \$98,900, the cost of one teacher, a teacher's aide and bus transportation for students to the center 12 miles northeast of Fallbrook.

School districts statewide have trimmed or planned to trim spending in anticipation of state funding cuts as Gov. Wilson attempts to deal with a projected 12.6 billion budget deficit.

Already, Fallbrook trustees have approved trimming more than \$1.1

million from next year's spending on school books, after-school sports, maintenance, crossing guards and other programs.

Two labor unions in the district recently approved a trimmed-down health care plan in an effort to save some jobs and \$1 million. The move by the unions helped, Jeffries said, but "it didn't do the whole thing."

Another \$375,000 in cuts need to be found in planning for the next school year, she said. "The decision hinges on the state finalizing their allocation to schools" and that may not happen until this summer.

In addition to the Ecology Center, music programs, which cost about

\$320,000 a year, also might be on the block.

Losing those programs is unacceptable to some, who say it is time for residents to help save them. The Ecology Center in particular is beginning to draw support.

"I've always looked at it as a jewel," said former district trustee Walt Krueger. "It does a tremendous job of teaching kids about ecology."

However, Krueger said the program always has been an extra, and "the only way I think it could survive is to have some independence of funding."

"All of us ... are going to have look at creative financing," said

Trustee Kathy Seemann.

Scott Gordon, teacher at the Ecology Center, and aide Jerry Palculich said it is ironic that the center's life is on the line as the 21st Earth Day approaches on April 21.

"When you really look at the education children are getting, I don't think we are doing enough to teach them about the environment," said Palculich, who has worked at the center since 1984.

So far, Gordon reports little success in obtaining financial support for the center. "There are some people that are interested, but nothing too promising yet," he said.

Palculich added: "If anybody would like to give us money, it would be greatly appreciated."

One possible source of revenue is the developer of a proposed rock quarry at Rosemary's Mountain, just east of Interstate 15 near state Route 76.

Hal Jensen, president of Palomar Aggregate, has pledged to give the Ecology Center 5 cents for each ton of material his Escondido firm handles. It is estimated that 1.2 million tons of material could be taken from the site each year. That could mean an annual contribution to the Ecology Center of \$60,000 for the next two decades, Jensen said.

However, the help probably won't come in time to meet the current crisis because an environmental impact report on the quarry still must be processed by the county, and much opposition is expected from local residents.

Jensen said it could be a year to 18 months before the cash is flowing, assuming the quarry is approved by the county.

In the meantime, Jensen said he will help raise money to keep the center open. "I don't want to see it die," he said. "I think this is one of the greatest things they have going for the kids."

# Center could fall prey to cuts

By Sophy Chaffee  
Staff Writer

DE LUZ — The De Luz Ecology Center — where elementary school students learn about the planet and the ecological web that supports life on Earth — itself faces an uncertain future.

The Fallbrook Union Elementary School District, which administers the program, may close the award-winning center next year because of state budget cuts.

Unions for teachers and classified employees this week ratified new health-care benefits plans that will save some money and jobs. But if proposed state cuts in education are approved, there may not be enough money in the district's coffers to pay for such programs as the De Luz center and the elementary school music programs, union leaders said.

The way teachers Scott Gordon and Jerry Palculich describe it, the De Luz program is an educational rite of passage for the 1,400 fifth- and third-graders who attend the center each year. The center also is known statewide and recently won the Goodyear-NADC resource conservation award.

Fifth-graders spend four days at the center, learning about the environment by panning for gold, capturing insects and entering the De

► See DeLuz, Page B-3



Staff Photo / Scott Varley

Fallbrook students pan for gold in the award-winning De Luz Ecology Center conservation program.

## Unions agree to trim health-care benefits

By Sophy Chaffee  
Staff Writer

FALLBROOK — Hoping to prevent layoffs, two Fallbrook Union Elementary School District unions approved new health-care packages that could trim \$1 million from the district's deficit.

Phil Leonelli, president of the Fallbrook Elementary School

Teachers Union, said his union overwhelmingly approved modifications to the health-care plan that could lead to significant cost reductions.

Chris Lee, president of the local California School Employees Association, said the support-personnel union Tuesday night approved the new health-care package, which has employees paying deductions

and making co-payments for the first time.

How much money ends up being saved in the 1991-92 school year will depend on the bid of the district's new insurance company comes in with, Lee said.

"We're still looking in the bidding, so its hard to say what the

► See Unions Page B-3

# De Luz

►From Page B-1

Luz Decathlon, a four-day environmental test. Third-graders take a one-day course in either living history or the environment. The third-grade program has been scaled back to accommodate the exploding number of fifth-graders, according to Scott.

For Kim Shinner, who was at the center as a member of Craig Schmad's fifth-grade class, De Luz is a family tradition. Her older sister attended a few years ago and told Kim about the program, she said, and now Kim is telling her younger brother about snakes, leeches and the joys of dissecting millipedes.

Kim and her friend Summer Bethea said they'll fight back if the program is cut.

"I'd be sad if it goes," Summer said. "I'd hate to see it if it turned into a construction site.

"It's not like we're here to get out of school. We're getting an education."

The childrens' enthusiasm was especially high, especially when describing their favorite project, dissecting owl pellets. With scientific precision, they recounted exactly what they had picked out of the owl's excrement.

"I found two hip bones and a sparrow skull," Summer said.

"I found two skulls," Kim said.

Gordon said the students cannot get this type of hands-on experience in the classroom.

De Luz was the scientific highlight of the year for his students when he was a teacher at San Onofre School, he said. It was the only field trip his students got some years, he said.

Gordon said he is amazed at what fascinates the students at the 128-acre conservation center.

"I don't know what they expect to find here," he said. "But they're always surprised at what they do find. Yesterday these girls found a millipede and wanted to dissect it."

Schmad, who has taken classes to the center since it opened in 1984, said something about the center make the students behave differently than they usually do.

"They have an opportunity to help each other here — just look at the interest," he said, looking up at the students as they scurried around the classroom, which is the old De Luz school house.

"I wish I could get them to be this interested in fractions," he said.

## Unions

►From Page B-1

final figure will be," Lee said. "We're not going to be able to save all the jobs, but we should be able to save most of them."

Lee and Leonelli are also concerned that Gov. Pete Wilson's proposed cuts to education could result in layoffs.

"It depends on the state, and we haven't heard from them yet," Leonelli said. "At first they were talking about a \$9 billion to \$10 billion deficit — now they are talking about a \$13 billion deficit."

Fallbrook Union Elementary School District trustees first identified the school system's deficit in February. At that time, they said the deficit reached \$1.75 million, with escalating health-care costs accounting for \$1.2 million and state cuts accounting for around \$800,000.

District officials said earlier this week that they will not know the final figures for the deficit until the state votes on its budget.

Up to 60 teachers stood to lose their jobs if the unions did not agree on the cost-saving health care package, Leonelli said. Of the 60 teachers who received preliminary layoff notices, most will probably be able to hold a job in the district next year.

Some teachers will have to move into new positions, he said. Leonelli, who received a preliminary layoff notice, said he may move from teaching music to teaching kindergarten.

Some programs, including the music classes and the De Luz Ecology Center, still may be cut because of state education cuts, Leonelli said.

Lee said 81 support-staff members could have lost their jobs, had hours cut or been shifted to another position if the new health-care plan had not been ratified.

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# Some Fallbrook programs spared

By Sophy Chaffee  
Staff Writer

FALLBROOK — Fallbrook Union Elementary School District trustees have cut almost \$500,000 from the budget, yet spared a portion of the music and ecology programs.

Trustees were forced to make the second round of cuts Monday to cover health-care costs and additional losses in state revenues. The district had previously cut \$600,000 from its 1991-92 budget, forcing layoffs of custodial and classified employees.

Four music teachers will be laid off, and the chorus program will be shelved because of Monday's action. There will be no classroom music for kindergartners and fourth-graders, and the instrumen-

tal music program will be trimmed.

One psychologist's position will be eliminated and replaced by a part-time consulting psychologist, and hours for special-education assistants and clerical substitutes will also be reduced.

The De Luz Ecology Center will remain open three-fifths of the time, which will mean an end to the third-grade program and will reduce the hours of the center's three employees. At one point, it looked as though the district might have to lay off 60 teachers and cut the Del Luz center and the music program entirely.

The center's hours could be expanded if a private group, Fallbrook Citizens for the De Luz Ecology Center, is successful in its fundraising efforts. Robert Tavano, a member of the group, told trustees

Monday that Rosemary's Mountain developers had already donated \$5,000. If the mining project is approved, the developers have pledged to donate a portion of their sales to the center.

Board chairman Warren Butcher said he would welcome private donations "as long as we don't have to come with an endorsement for anything or any project."

All trustees said the cuts were painful to make and that they would reinstate programs if money became available.

"We are not closing the books yet," said trustee Greg Dahms.

By law, the district has to notify employees of final layoffs by May 15. It sent preliminary layoff notices to 60 teachers earlier this spring.

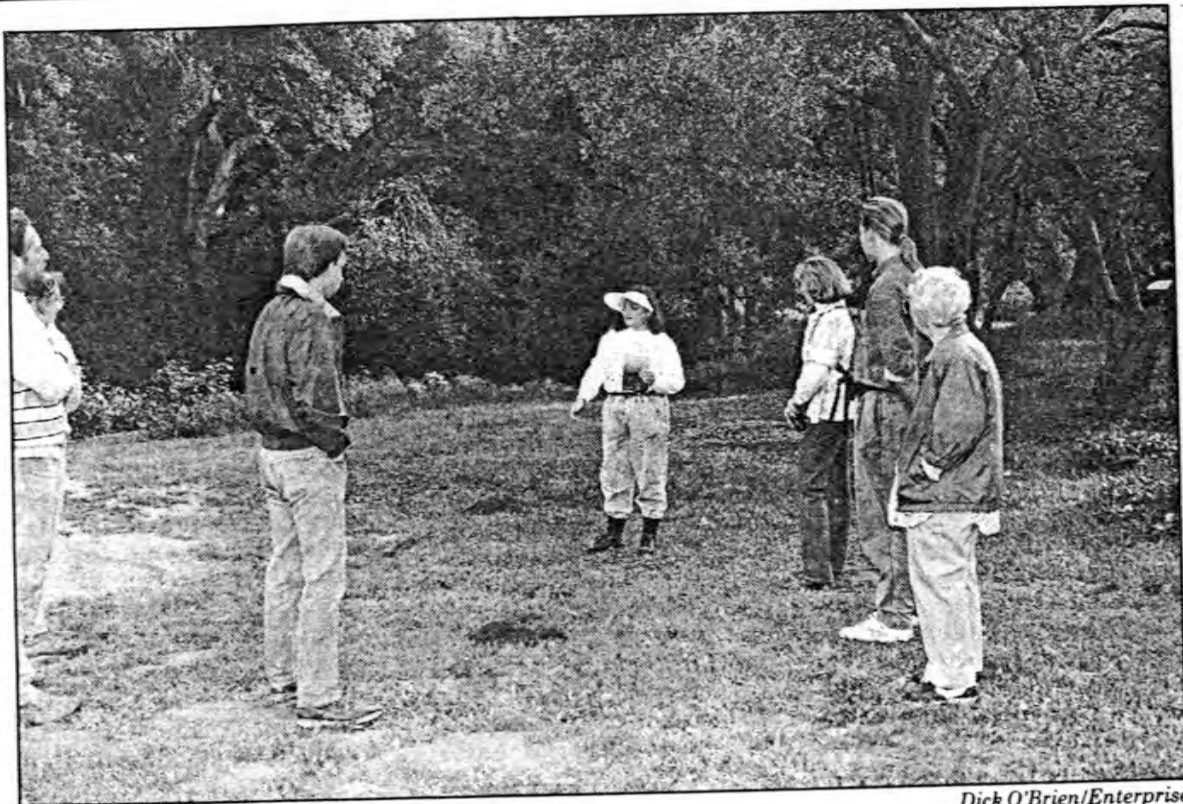
One parent of a special-education

student asked the board to reinstate the hours of special-education aides. Without the assistance of a full-time aide, her son would not be able to get to the bathroom or walk to assembly, she said.

The district could know by the end of this week if it would save any money by choosing a new health insurance company. Outgoing Superintendent Bill Diedrich said Monday that bids on the insurance contract ranged from \$375,000 (about what the district hoped to pay) to \$750,000.

Trustee Kathleen Seemann, who recently returned from a trip to Sacramento, said the state's deficit is larger than expected and that the education budget could take another cut. "I would characterize the mood of the capital as very glum," she said.

May 1991



Dick O'Brien/Enterprise

DE LUZ ECOLOGY CENTER was toured last week as the kick-off event of Soil & Water Stewardship Week. Mirrion Resource Conservation District hosted lunch and the outdoor event; Scott Gordon and Jerry Palculich led the group on a tour designed to reflect that given to children who attend the center.

# Teacher, aide sacrifice to save Fallbrook school ecology center

By Tim Mayer  
Special to The Union

FALLBROOK — The De Luz Ecology Center gained some breathing room this week when a Fallbrook teacher and a teacher's aide volunteered to take steep pay cuts to save their jobs and keep the program running in the midst of a budget crisis.

Scott Gordon, teacher for the center operated by the Fallbrook Union Elementary School, and aide Jerry Palculich volunteered to take a 40 percent cut in their workdays next school year, a move accepted Monday by school trustees.

Meanwhile, local residents have launched a drive to raise enough money to restore the 8-year-old program to full operation.

Administrators had recommended Gordon's post be eliminated to save \$42,000. Instead the board accepted the cutback compromise, along with the elimination of the portion of the center program aimed at third graders.

Those moves will save about \$30,000, according to district Supt. Jennifer Jeffries. It is hoped that community fund drives will make up for the difference and allow the program to be restored to full operation.

Palculich said it was partly a safety concern that prompted their decision to take pay cuts. Without a teacher at the rural center, it would be difficult to control the groups of up to 30 children who visit.

About 1,400 third and fifth graders

spend up to four days each year at the center, taking nature walks and learning about the environment.

The De Luz cutbacks were among those approved Monday to slice \$473,000 out of next year's school budget. Others were to the music program, psychology services and supplies and equipment. Trustees previously approved an additional \$1 million in cuts.

The budget-trimming is being driven by threatened reductions in state spending on schools as Gov. Wilson attempts to deal with a multi-billion-dollar state deficit.

Trustee Rosie Rideout praised Gordon and Palculich and said she thinks residents will help find money for the rest of the program funding.

"I really feel like the community is going to get out and back this," she said.

An organization called Fallbrook Citizens for the De Luz Ecology Center, headed by Fallbrook banker Bob Tavano, has vowed to raise the money to make up for the cuts.

That effort got an early boost this week with a \$5,000 donation from Palomar Aggregate of Escondido.

"I would hope the rest of the community would come forth and help," said company president Hal Jensen.

Jensen also praised the teachers. "That's a very dedicated thing for them to do. You don't find many people who will take a salary hit to keep a program alive."

Jensen's company is attempting to develop a rock quarry at Rosemary's Mountain, just each of Interstate 15 near State 76, and also has pledged 5 cents for each ton of rock toward the center, which could bring \$60,000 a year.

It may be months or years before that is reality because the quarry must obtain county permits and may draw opposition from residents.

Jensen said he would do everything he could to keep the center alive, "whether or not we get a permit. ... It would be terrible to see that die."

.....



# Children's voices ring no more at school

By Frank Bartholomew  
The Press-Enterprise

## DE LUZ

Tucked away in the foothills of De Luz, about 15 miles southwest of Temecula, sits a one-room schoolhouse that has served children off and on for more than 60 years.

Now closed, the De Luz School, built in 1927, is a reminder to the farmers, laborers and other residents of the small community of a time when first- through

eighth-graders attended classes there together.

"It was just a wonderful place to go to school," said 50-year-old De Luz resident Jeanette Roll, who went to the school for eight years. "There was a lot of freedom there. It was a good environment."

The school, on De Luz Road in San Diego County, is situated on 120 acres covered with sycamore and oak trees, and bushes filled with wild red berries.

A semicircular driveway winds around a fountain in front of the school. A huge live oak is to the right, not far from the 8-foot by 8-foot wooden structure that once served as De Luz's post office. The post office was once featured in "Ripley's Believe It or Not" as the smallest in the world.

Stairs lead up to the school's front doors, which sit just slightly back from an archway. A bell hangs above the archway,

adding to the building's Spanish mission look.

From 1927 until 1968, the school served the tiny community of about 300. Long tables, rather than desks, were used by the pupils, who usually numbered from six to 20.

"We had no electricity, no phone, no nothing," said Bill Eckhardt, a 74-year-old Lake Elsinore resident who spent four

Please see **SCHOOL, B-4**

## SCHOOL

Continued from B-1  
years at the school beginning in 1928. "I have good memories of it. It was a lot of fun."

But in 1968 the school was closed because it did not meet earthquake safety standards.

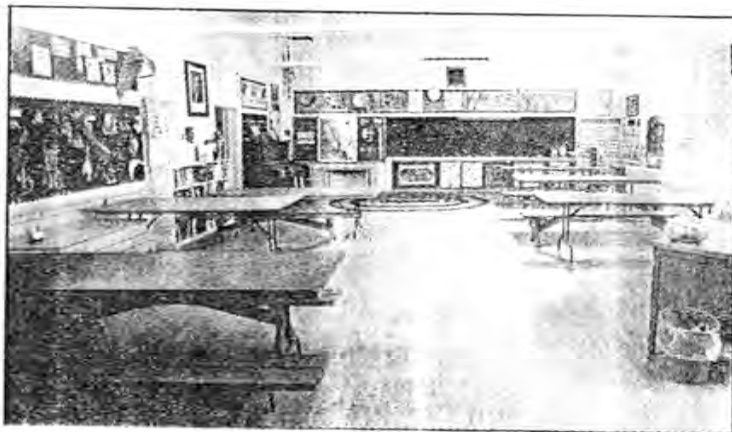
Used briefly as a community center, it reopened in 1971 as part of a Fallbrook Union Elementary School District program to teach youngsters about nature and the environment.

Renamed the De Luz Ecology Center, the school was open five days a week for visits from third- and fifth-graders bused in from Fallbrook.

Once there, the children used no textbooks. Instead, they took nature walks on the miles of hiking trails covering the grounds. They learned about wildlife, plants, the soil, rocks and Indians.

In the schoolhouse, they studied insects, birds, wildlife and Indian cultures.

"It was really neat to see the kids' excitement when they got off the bus," said Scott Gordon, one of the program's teachers. "The kids



The interior of the De Luz School.

really looked forward to it and left with a really good experience.

"Kids in a (regular) classroom setting can get frustrated, but they would come out to this environment and really shine."

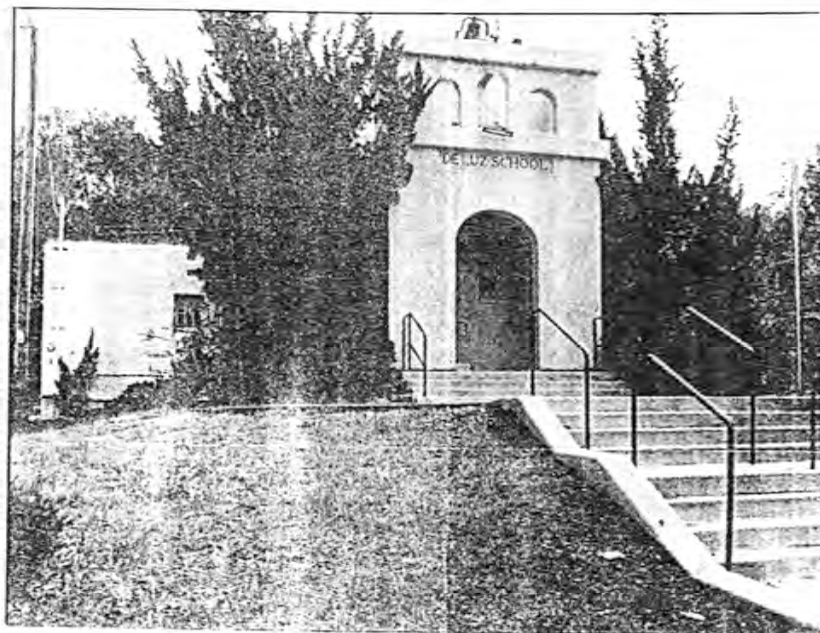
Three years ago the school district discontinued the program due to a lack of funding. Now the school is empty and gardens in the back are barren, sticks still marking the spots where Oregon grapes, coastal sagebrush and fremontia once grew.

"It's tragic that it's not being used right now," said Gordon. "We need to get that program up and running again."

Although not open on a regular basis, the school has proven valuable on a couple of occasions. In 1978, it was used when the Santa Margarita River overflowed, cutting off De Luz pupils from their schools in Fallbrook.

And last year, when January's heavy rains brought more flooding, cutting people off, the school was

1994/95 (?)



The one-room De Luz School was built in 1927.

used from February until June.

Gale Cunningham, who taught at the school during that time, recalled how the kids' experiences at the school were so different from what they would have experienced

had they been in a regular public school.

"I remember so vividly a group of second-graders teaching a high school-age student to jump the

Jimmy

double ropes ham-older at the cause

# Old De Luz schoolhouse is open again

Story by **CHRISTIE RITTER**  
Photography by **WALDO NILO**

**DE LUZ**—After a 2½-year closure, the De Luz Ecology Center is once again open for business.

On Tuesday, a group of fifth-graders from Live Oak School was the first to take advantage of the Fallbrook Elementary District's newest resource. Not that the center is new exactly. It was operated for many years as a one-room schoolhouse, serving the children of De Luz.

Built in 1927, the school closed its doors in

Please see **SCHOOL, B2** >



Rebecca Remondin, 9, of Fallbrook, gets a lesson in dissection.

*Continued from B1*

1969, when the De Luz School District merged with the Fallbrook Elementary School District. The De Luz school was then transformed into the ecology center, a place where children could learn about nature by actually going outside to see, feel and listen to their environment.

Cuts in state funding closed the school in 1992. At the time, teacher Scott Gordon had a teacher's aide and a full-time custodian to help out. Now Gor-

don asks his visitors to lend a hand by wiping off tables and stacking chairs. But Gordon is thrilled to be back, even if he has more work to do than in the past.

With a degree in outdoor education, Gordon is in his element at the De Luz Center. "I love it, it's so much fun being here," Gordon said, freely letting his enthusiasm for teaching kids about nature show. "If they appreciate their environment, they're going to take better care of it."

With 120 acres and five miles of hiking trails, Gordon says there is plenty to show visitors. For fifth-graders there's a hike to search for native plants and animals. Later in the week, the students will pan for gold in a nearby stream.

For some students, the highlight was picking through owl pellets to look for animal bones. "I found a skull, some teeth, and some other small bones," said fifth-grader Colton Bernard. He explained that pellets are composed of fur and bones that have

been regurgitated by barn owls. "I'm still not finished by far," Colton said, "because this owl ate a lot of stuff."

All fifth-graders in the Fallbrook Elementary School District will have the chance to spend four days at the De Luz Ecology Center this fall or winter. In the spring, the district's third-graders will spend two days there, Gordon said. District officials estimate that the newly reopened center will be visited by 600 students during the upcoming school year.

# Ecology center reopens

By Gary Warth  
Staff Writer

FALLBROOK — After a 2 1/2-year hiatus, students again are panning for gold, learning about minerals and picking through bones in Fallbrook.

The DeLuz Ecology Center reopened this month for students in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District, returning after budget cuts had put the program on hold.

"There's not a district in the county that wouldn't kill to have a program like this," said teacher Patrick Rusnell, whose Live Oak Elementary students studied at the center Monday through Thursday.

"They could spend 10 times

► See Ecology, Page B-4

## Ecology

►From Page B-1

as much, and they still wouldn't have anything this good," Rusnell said.

There was a time when the school district could not afford the center, even though it's considered a bargain at \$51,000 this year.

A declining school enrollment — meaning less money for the district — combined with inflation forced the district to cut its music program and close the center two years ago.

"We worked very, very hard holding the line in a lot of ways," said Rusnell, explaining how the district brought back some music programs and opened the center again this year.

For teacher Scott Gordon, reopening the center meant he was freed from the classroom and able to return again to practice in outdoor education, which he studied in college.

Teaching at the center is not for

everybody, Gordon admits. Fifth-grade classes will rotate through the center each week, and Gordon will teach the same lessons to each class and then begin rotating third-grade classes through the center.

On Monday, students hiked along the trails and studied with Gordon in the old DeLuz School, a one-room schoolhouse that used to serve the now-dissolved DeLuz School District.

Throughout the week, students study animals, dissect owl pellets and learn about minerals, American Indians and the environment.

Tuesday is gold-panning day for the youngsters, who hike across a suspension bridge to prospect in a nearby stream.

The chance of finding real gold in the stream is not very great, Gordon said, but students are likely to discover magnetite and other minerals, and they have a fun time in the process.

"Remember, if you find a lot of gold, I get a percentage and Mr. Rusnell gets a percentage," Gordon jokes.

"We're gonna be rich!" a boy says, clutching a pan.

"Mr. Gordon," another boy says, holding up a shard from a bottle. "I was panning for gold and struck glass."

After a few minutes of panning, another student pulls a prank on his classmates; he has snuck a large, gold-painted rock down to the stream.

"Look at Sean!" a student yells. "He found gold!"

"He found the mother lode!"

"You guys are stupid," another student says. "That's a painted rock."

Gordon takes the jokes in stride and turns the prank into a lesson by telling the students that if the rock were real gold it would weigh more than 100 pounds.

Gold panning is followed by lunch on outdoor picnic tables, after which students break into groups, with some studying minerals in the classroom and others conducting experiments to understand how different bird beaks are used to pick up food.

The center is about 10 miles off Mission Avenue in Fallbrook in the old DeLuz School, which the Fallbrook district acquired in 1970.

Rusnell, who had worked in an outdoor education program in San Diego, created an educational program at the center with fellow teachers Sue Shimman and Gale Hawk in 1971.

The only trail at the center back then was a fire break, and teachers on field trips led their students with guides written by Rusnell.

A few years later the district stationed a teacher at the center, and students got firsthand nature lessons there until the budget cutbacks.

The reopened center is slightly scaled back to keep the price at \$51,000 a year, and Gordon no longer has a full-time custodian or teacher's aide at the site.

But the cutbacks do not mean the center will have less to offer. Gordon said he hopes to have a weather station and a computer to analyze data from it sometime next year.

# As I See It

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## Deluz Ecology Center

Thursday, September 15, 1994 The Enterprise B-7

*By Dick O'Brien*

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### reopens for fifth graders

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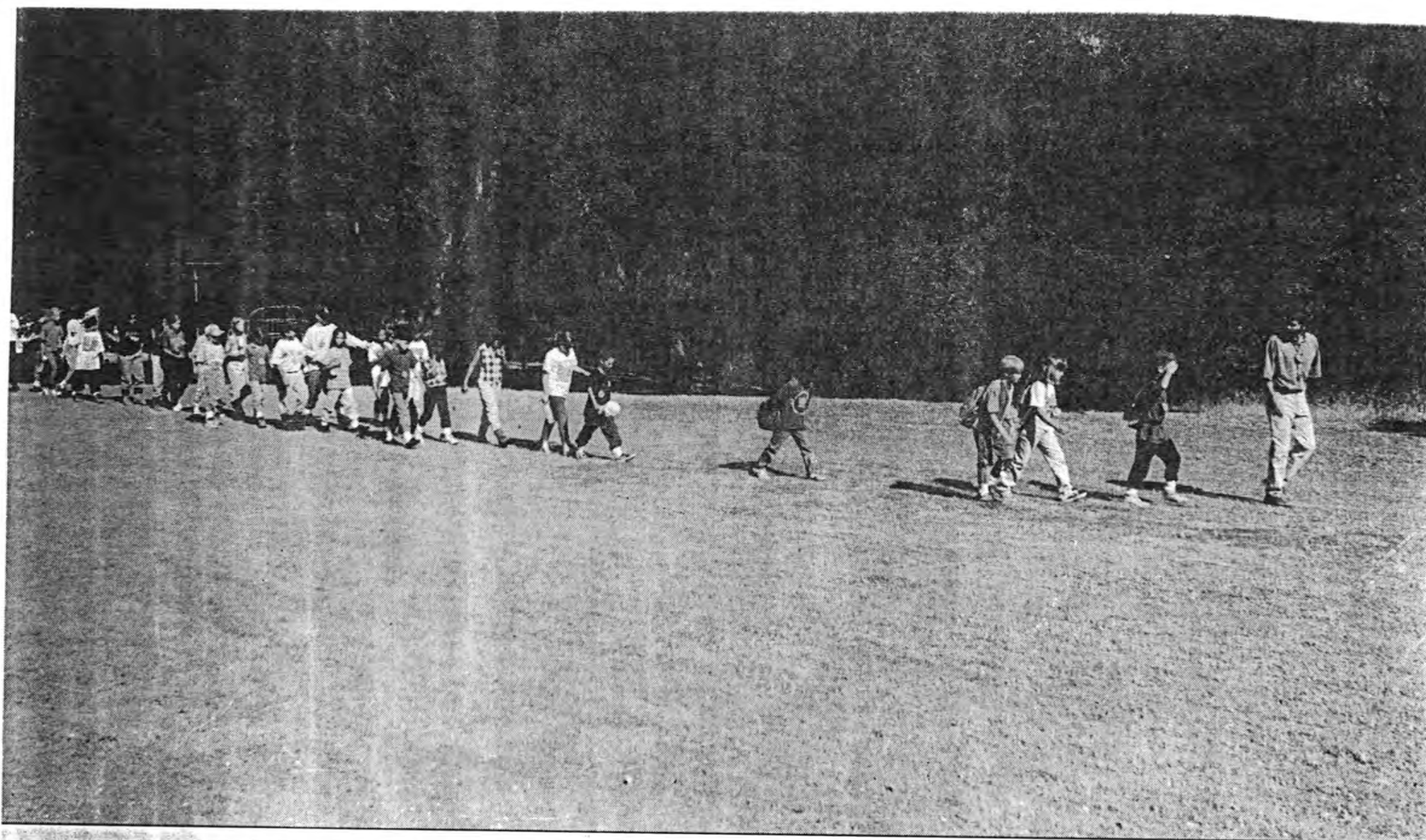


ROSIE RIDEOUT, clerk of the Elementary School Governing Board, examines a portion of the collection of taxidermy specimens from Live Oak School.



TEACHER SCOTT GORDON greets a new class for their one-week experience at the DeLuz Ecology center. Each of the students in the elementary school district will be given the opportunity to spend five school days at the center

during their fifth grade year. They will explore subjects which not only discuss environmental issues but those which examine the history of the geological, floral, and faunal development of Southern California.



OFF INTO THE WILD WOODS, on their first hiking trail, headed by Ecology Center director Gordon, the class starts a learning adventure which will range from subjects like safety in the outdoors (if it rattles, or has three leaves, don't

touch it) to the enthusiastically received opportunity to pan for gold. Note: Yes, there is gold, there is in every stream in this part of the country; no, you won't get rich, just wet and sore.



GOVERNING BOARD president Kathy Seemann discusses the week-long program with teacher Sara Andrade who accompanied her class to the center.

Section

**B**

Sunday, September 25, 1994

The Blade-Citizen

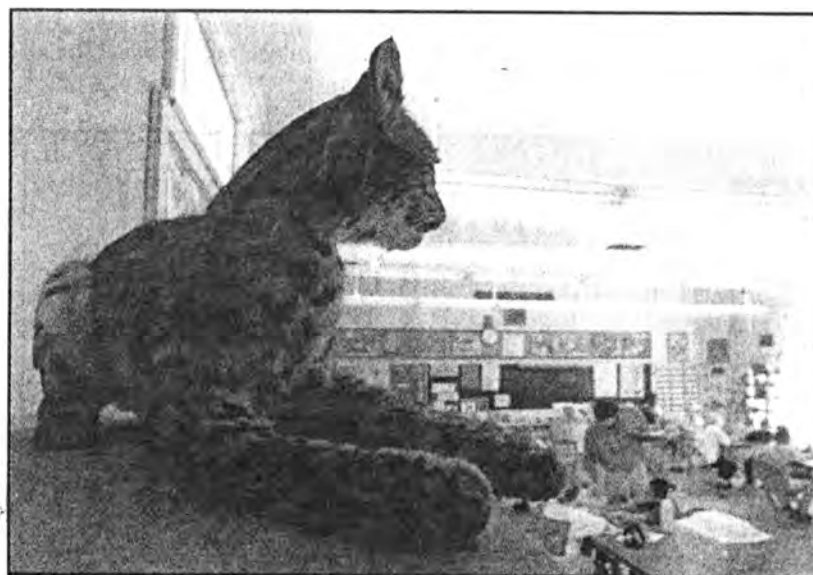
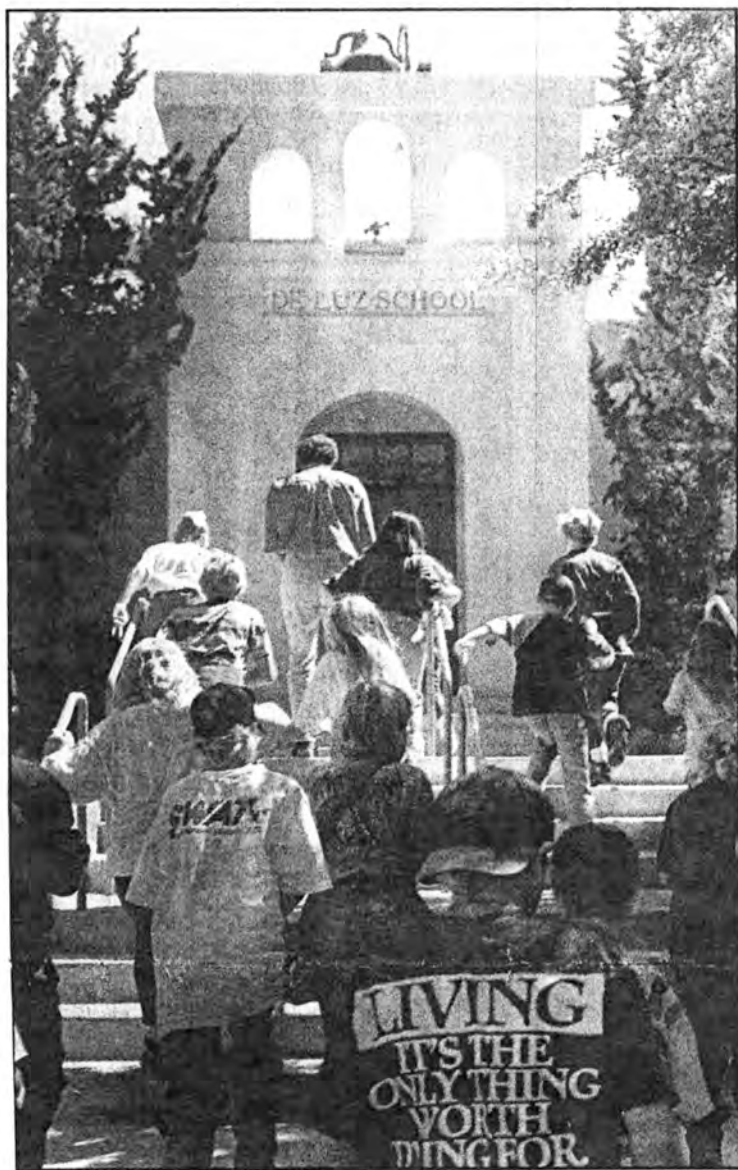
# North County



Staff Photos / Hayne Palmour

Above, students from Live Oak Elementary School pan for gold in a creek near the DeLuz Ecology Center.





Above, a stuffed bobcat appears to be watching over the classroom. Far right, Scott Gordon, director of the program, leads students into the front entrance of the former one-room schoolhouse. Near right, sixth-grader Amy Perez closely inspects a mineral specimen.





**Chris Brown, 11, holds a spider during a day at the reopened De Luz Ecology Center.**

# ENTERPRISE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1996

VOL. 85 No. 41 35¢ PER COPY



PHOTO COURTESY OF DeLUZ ECOLOGY CENTER

DELUZ ECOLOGY CENTER'S Open House Nov. 2 attracted some very young members of the general public. Above, Caleb Gordon hugs an old-fashioned stove, fortunately not in use. For more pictures, see page B-8.



- *Nope, the old post office boxes aren't haunted. They are located at the DeLuz Ecology Center and Caleb Gordon is checking them out, see more on B-8.*
- *Thanksgiving services, activities, see B-5.*

# Village LIFE

KAREN O. COLTERMAN, EDITOR

THE ENTERPRISE

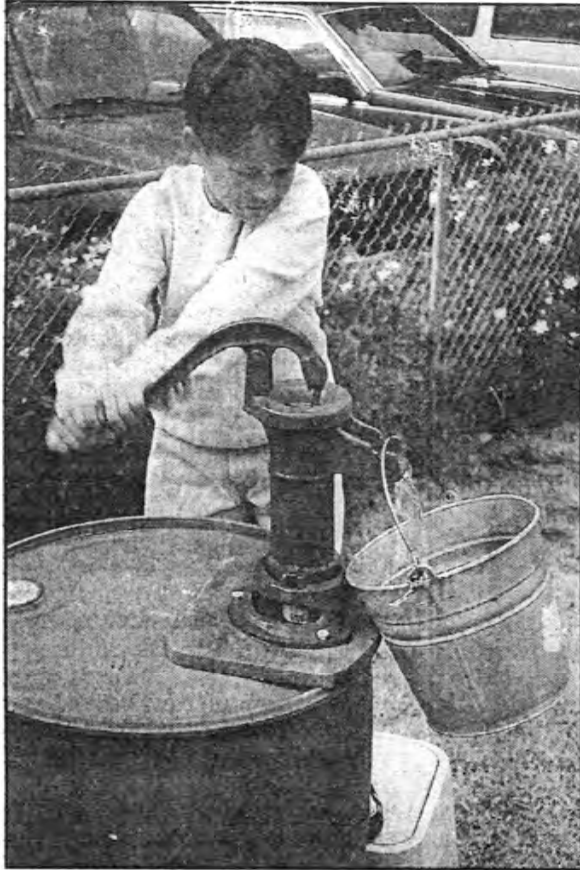
# B

SECTION

NOVEMBER 21, 1996



**JESSICA Lopez, Jennifer Lopez and Jennifer Spaulding enjoy making thaumatropes (old-time toys) during their visit to the DeLuz Ecology Center open house.**



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DELUZ ECOLOGY CENTER

**DEREK ELDREDGE** experiences using an old-time pitcher pump at the DeLuz Ecology Center's open house, which was Nov. 2 at the center.



**CALEB GORDON**, son of ecology teacher Scott Gordon and his wife Jill, was caught grinding acorns using a Luiseno metate, which is a local native American grinding stone. Students from Mary Fay Pendleton and La Paloma visited the DeLuz Ecology Center. The next open house is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Dec. 14. The community is invited.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1997**



Photos by SALLY LARSEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## De Luz Ecology Center holds open house

Above, Debbie Lang, Rachael Lang, Karina Leal (baby) and Alyssa Lincoln look over a replica of a turn of the century Sears catalogue as Scott Gordon the teacher at the ecology center looks on. Right, one of the displays at the open house was this one that included photos of early Fallbrook scenes, and household items in use in the early 1900s.



## A DAY IN DE LUZ



Teacher Scott Gordon sits by a monitor that is displaying the digital images he took of the Santa Margarita fire, which burned around the De Luz Ecology Center. The fire happened during the summer.

A few times a year, the De Luz Ecology Center extends an invitation to an open house. Nestled deep within the woods of De Luz and near the Santa Margarita River, it is always a fun time to introduce children to nature.

The center is part of the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District. Teacher Scott Gordon leads classes of students through the center each day.

The education center will be out of funds at the end of the year, and grant money is being pursued. Nevertheless, Gordon continues to host the open house.

This recent open house was attended by families. Gordon set up items that are used in the third and fifth grade curriculums within the district.

Included are the history of the 1906 period, the Luiseno Indian culture and general ecology knowledge.

During the 1906 history section, Gordon dons overalls similar to those worn in that period, and the students know him then as Master Gordon.

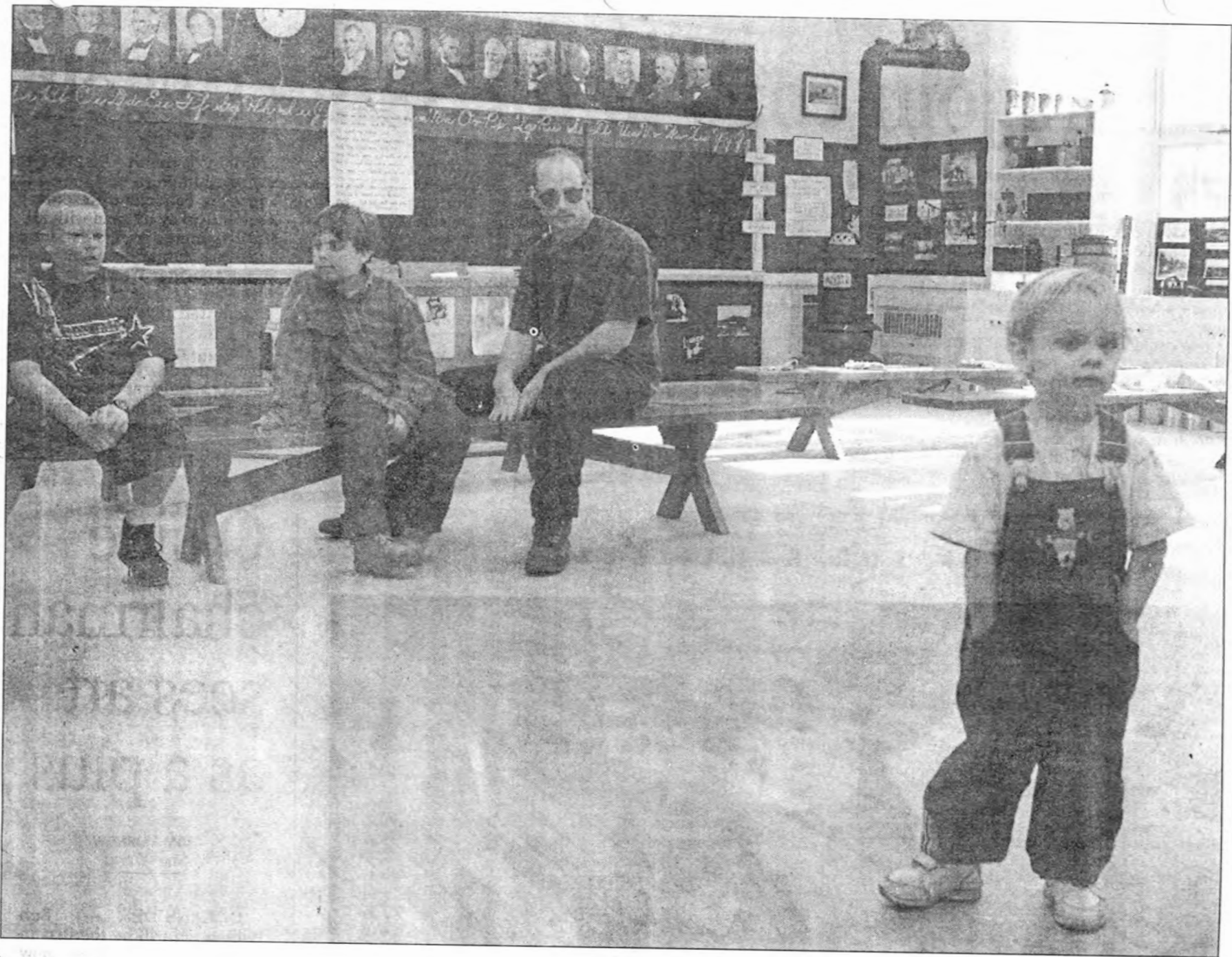
He says that when he sees his students in town, they say 'There's Master Gordon, my teacher.'

Each fifth grade Fallbrook Union Elementary School District student spends four days at the center being taught by Gordon. Each third grader in the district spends two days.

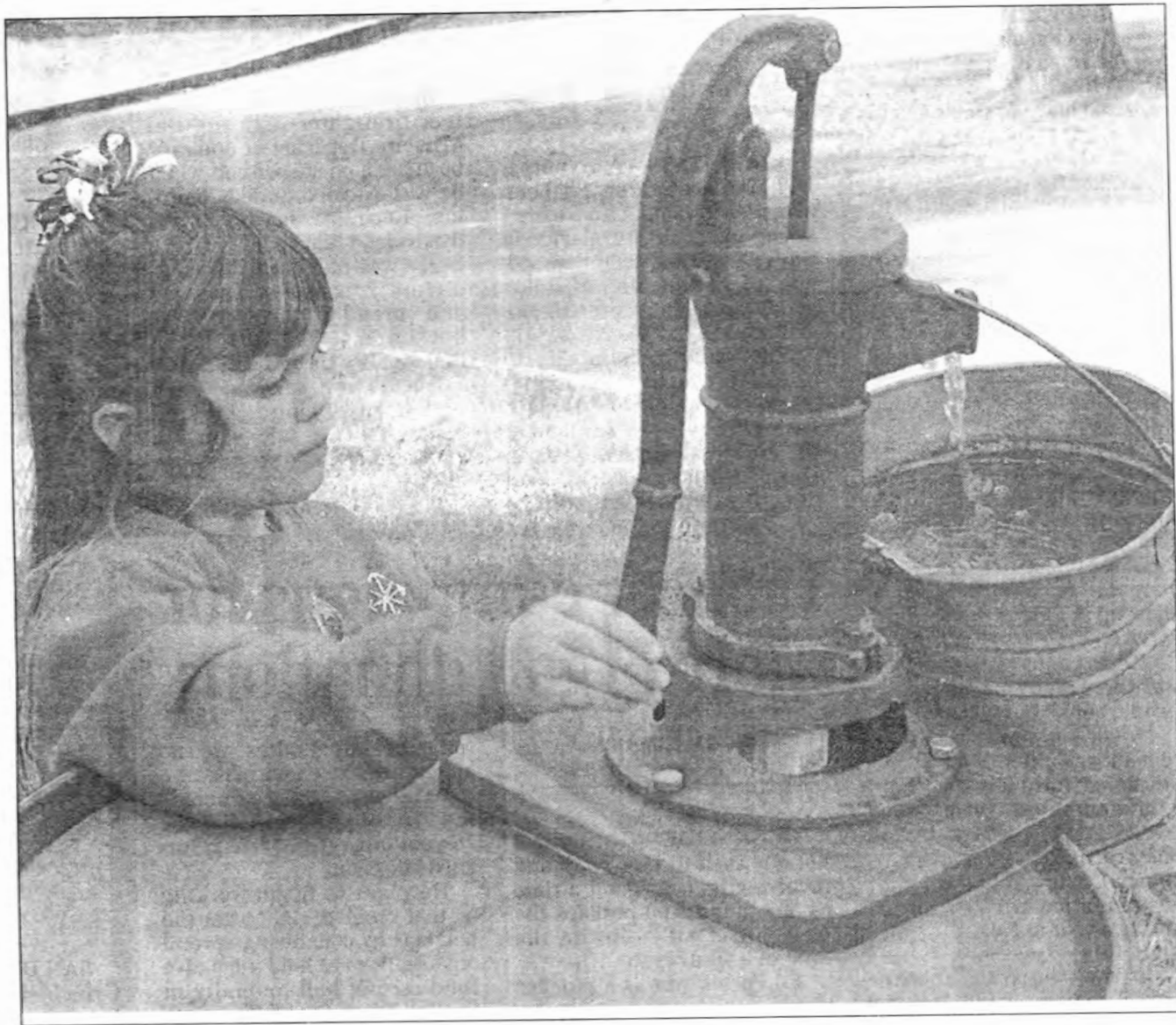
Call the district at (760) 723-7020 for more information about the center.

**PHOTOS BY SALLY LARSEN /**  
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER





Connor McKlvey looks around the school room at the De Luz Ecology Center. He was especially interested in the table with the animal skins.



Maggie Moore works a pump that was set-up in a barrel so that visitors to the De Luz Ecology Center open house could pump water as was done at the turn of the century.



On display at the open house is a collection of photos from early Fallbrook, and a selection of household items used then.



Brittany Dierker and Kalin McKlvey try out the rhythm sticks.



Debbie Lang, Rachael Lang, Karina Leal (baby) and Alyssa Lincoln look over a replica of a turn of the century Sears catalogue as Scott Gordon the teacher at the ecology center looks on.



Students from La Paloma School enjoy the old-fashioned seesaw at the De Luz Ecology Center.

SALLY LARSEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## De Luz eco center excites students to learn

SUSAN BORSCH

FOR THE NORTH COUNTY TIMES

DE LUZ — Ten-year-old Sean Callahan's favorite school activities last week included taking a long nature hike and sloshing around in a stream panning for gold. A student at La Paloma Elementary School, Sean was one of a class of

lucky fifth-graders who got to take their turn at the De Luz Ecology Center last week.

"I was here in third grade, so I knew it would be really fun," Sean said. "In the classroom you're boxed in, but here you get to have fresh air and walk around and see nature."

The De Luz Ecology Center is 128 acres of unspoiled land, along with a one-room school-

house, built in 1926, and old-fashioned grass playground. The acreage was deeded to the Fallbrook Unified School District in the 1960s, when children in De Luz began attending Fallbrook schools. The district now uses the area for educational field trips for Fallbrook elementary school students.

Scott Gordon, lead teacher

at the ecology center explained: "From September through December the third-graders come for two consecutive days, one class at a time, and we do a living history program. The kids re-enact a day from 1906 in the one-room schoolhouse. They write on slate boards and read from the

► CENTER, B-6

## ► CENTER

Continued from B-1

old McGuffey readers. We also make cornbread, butter and ice cream using the old-fashioned methods."

Gordon said the third-graders also learn history about local American Indians, the Fuisenos, and take a nature hike to observe the plants and animals that were utilized in the daily life of the tribe. Then, starting in January, Fallbrook's fifth-grade classes take turns enjoying a four-day experience at the center, focusing on environmental and other natural sciences.

The ecology center includes acres of woodland, riparian areas and chaparral, Gordon said. The fifth-graders do more extensive hiking, study fire ecology, hunt for aquatic insects and dissect owl pellets. What they learn here ties together with their classroom curriculum.

Sean's teacher, Brooke Stebner, accompanying her students on a De Luz hike last week, said, "This serves as a spring-board to what we'll be studying back in class. The kids use the books and materials in the schoolhouse to answer questions, but mostly the activities here are fun and the kids don't even realize they're learning.

"While they're doing gold panning, for example, they're learning about erosion and runoff in the stream, types of rocks and gold panning history.

"Many of the kids have had brothers or sisters who've done this program, and it's one of the things that they're really looking forward to coming into fifth grade," she continued.

Gordon keeps the schoolhouse equipped with an abundance of nature-related learning materials. Tables and shelves are lined with preserved insects, animal skulls, bones and skins, and bird nests, along with many books and posters. After writing in their journals, Stebn-



SALLY LARSEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Jose Dorantes fills his small container with the results of his gold-panning efforts in De Luz Creek as part of the fifth-grade study program through the Fallbrook school district.**

er's class and a few special education students headed out to enjoy the playground, which still includes hard-to-find equipment like see-saws and a merry-go-round.

"We do things here that aren't possible in the classroom," he said. "Some kids are very sheltered. They've never seen a tarantula before. We're very lucky to have this facility.

"The kids love it here. They always say they wish they could stay all year long. Some that don't excel in their regular classroom really shine out here, and it's good because their peers get to see them in a different light."

Gordon said the ecology center, which is located 11 miles north of Fallbrook on De Luz Murrieta Road, is open to the public on weekends. The area includes five miles of hiking trails, an intermittent stream and picnic tables. Maintenance of the facility comes out of the Fallbrook Union School District's budget, which also funds transportation for the students.

According to Mike Choate, assistant supervisor for Educational Services, the school district is in the process of searching for help with funding the De Luz programs.

"We had a two-year (Federal Emergency Management Agency) grant that really helped us out, but that ended last year, Choate said. "When we do our budget, the ecology center is part of that mix so it's always in a bit of jeopardy. But it's a very valuable resource, so we do our best to maintain the program.

"There's a lot of environmental science funding to purchase property, but not to support an ongoing operation," he added. "If we had an ongoing funding source, the program would be more secure."

If the future of the De Luz Ecology Center programs is somewhat precarious, don't tell Fallbrook Street School third-grader Adrian Brambila, who went on his field trip last September.

He remembers eating homemade ice cream and learning lots of stuff, and he was very happy to hear he could anticipate another trip in two years.

"I'm excited," he said. "I can't wait."

## Students hunt for nature's treasures at ecology center

ANN McDUFFIE  
FOR THE NORTH COUNTY TIMES

DE LUZ — Armed with buckets and nets, students wade in a shallow creek on the hunt for aquatic insects. "I got a baby worm," said Sandy Alvarez, 11, as she hunkered down over her bucket.

At the De Luz Ecology Center, a forest stream and chaparral hills become a temporary classroom in a four-day outdoor education program for all fifth-grade students in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District.

With plenty of hands-on experience, under the guidance of teacher Scott Gordon, students learn about local plant and animal life, habitats, food chains and natural cycles.

"There's a population of kids who may not get out of Fallbrook and certainly not out in this environment," said Live Oak Elementary School teacher Robert Christensen, whose students were hunting for water bugs. During the week, the children also will hike the nature trails, dissect owl pellets, pan for gold and identify rocks and minerals.

"We're learning everything about nature," said Adrian Brambila, 11. "I really liked the hike. We got to go up cliffs, see cool-looking plants. I saw a snake, too."

Gordon agreed there is the occasional snake, but he said hikers are more likely to see hawks, lizards and assorted insects. Since the early 1990s Gordon has led the science program, building upon the original idea, which was developed by Jackie Judd.



Photos by SALLY LARSEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Students from Live Oak School in Fallbrook fan out along the creek at De Luz Ecology Center last week as they look for aquatic life in the water. The fifth-graders spend four days at the center studying the local ecology.



Above left, students return to the old De Luz School, now the ecology center, after searching for life in a nearby creek. Right, Adriana Ponce, right, and Ashley Schaeffer look at what they have collected from the creek.

In 1998 the ecology center received the Golden Bell award, which recognizes outstanding programs in school districts throughout California.

The center also serves as a two-day living history study for third-graders in the fall. The 128-acre center is about 10 miles north of Fallbrook on scenic De Luz Road.

A one-room schoolhouse, built in 1927 and carefully preserved, is now a classroom and science lab for about 1,000 students who visit the day program throughout the year.

The room is a museum filled with a collection of artifacts — a stuffed owl with outstretched wings, insects imbedded in plastic molds, rock samples, bird nests — each neatly labeled, a mark of Gordon's touch.

Upon arrival to the center, students receive a four-page

workbook. They must search for clues within the classroom and on the nature walks to successfully answer the questions.

"It's a good way to reinforce what's taught on the trail," Gordon said. "If we just talk about it, often it's gone, but writing it down, it sticks."

The students also keep a journal, which, along with the workbook counts toward their science grade.

"It's a serious part of our curriculum," Christensen said. While children roamed the room searching for answers, Cameron Bradshaw patiently counted the rings on a cut of wood.

"It's 60 years old," he said triumphantly, adding the answer to his workbook. Back outdoors, Gordon held the students enraptured with his quick sense of humor as he showed them how to collect in-

sects from the stream.

The excited students scooped up water beetles, tadpoles, even a crayfish. Jacob Wagaman, 11, showed Gordon the slug he caught in his net.

"Put him in the bucket. We'll save him for the barbecue on Friday," Gordon said, with a grin.

After students identify and study the flora and fauna, they will leave the ecology center with a better understanding and appreciation of their local environment.

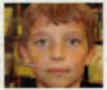
"It's a definite treasure for Fallbrook," Christensen said. The ecology center will hold an open house from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 27.

Families of children who have attended the day program, as well as anyone who is interested, are invited to come take a look.

Information: (760) 723-7070.

# IOWA STREET TIMES

## Third Graders Go Back In Time



**Gavin Mahoney**  
Staff Writer

De Luz School

On October 12 and 13, 2010 Ms. Leonard's third graders went to the De Luz School House. The class went to De Luz to learn how life was 100 years ago. The class learned that life was very difficult. Back then, students walked or had to ride a horse to school. All of the students would drink out of the same water cup and it would not be washed for the whole school year. Boys would get hit by a stick if they broke the rules.

On the second day, the class took a hike through the woods and up a hilly trail. The teacher and guide, Schoolmaster Gordon, picked two flowers and one funny-shaped olive to show students what plants grow in the area. One flower smelled horrible, but the other one smelled great. The students really liked their trip to De Luz.

### De Luz School



**Annabella Smith**  
Staff Writer

Ms. Leonard's class went on a field trip to the De Luz School House for two days in October. The students went to De Luz to learn about the children who originally went to school there.

Back in the early 1900s, students came on horseback or walked, sometimes barefooted. Instead of a lunch bag, they brought their lunches in a pail with maybe a potato on cold days or a cob of corn. Today, students might have a sandwich and a bag of chips instead.

On the second day, the class learned about Native Americans by



**Joseph Arioto**  
Staff Writer

De Luz School

Over the course of two school days on October 13th and 14th, 2010, Ms. Leonard's third grade class took a bus back in time and learned a lot about a different way of living. The class went to the De Luz School House to experience old-fashioned life.

Mr. Gordon taught everyone how to do things like they did over 100 years ago. The third graders were able to learn about the old school house and what it would have been like to be a student there. They learned how to make ice cream using a churn and rock salt. Students learned it was a lot harder to make ice cream than it is to buy it at the store.

On the second day, students learned about Native Americans. Students went on a hike and also learned how to make acorns into flour. Everyone agreed that it was much harder to live in that time period than it is today.

### De Luz School



**Sam Ashbrook**  
Staff Writer

Ms. Leonard's third grade class went on a field trip to the De Luz School House on October 12 and 13, 2010. Students were excited to travel by a large school bus. On the first day of the field trip, the students wrote on slate chalkboards with chalk to learn what it was like 100 years ago.

On the second day, students learned about Native Americans. The children went on a hike and found a Native American path. The students had a great time.



*Ms. Leonard's Class on the steps of the De Luz School House.*

playing instruments while doing a rain dance. The students did such a good job, that it actually rained for the next three days! Students also played games such as a guessing game with rocks and wooden sticks and counting games using lima beans. The students had so much fun that they can't wait to go again!





*Mr. Gordon, You are awesome! Thanks for everything!*



Photos by **SALLY LARSEN** / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Ecology center holds open house

Top, students from Live Oak School in Fallbrook watch as teacher Rodney Amstutz gets ready to plant an Engelmann oak at the De Luz Ecology Center. The oaks were raised from seeds taken from one of two Engelmann Oaks at Live Oak School. Jody Williams raised the oaks and led the planting activity in March at the De Luz Ecology Center. Below, Scott Gordon clears away grass from around a seedling Engelmann oak planted at the De Luz Ecology Center in Fallbrook recently. May 26 was an open house at the school, and marked the end of the fifth grade study.



# Teachers of Month honored by Fallbrook Rotary



*Rotary President Janice Schultz (center) introduces Teachers of the Month Liz Lewellen (left) and Scott Gordon to club members.*

*Larry Rothacher photo*

FALLBROOK — Scott Gordon and Elizabeth Lewellen were introduced as Teachers of the Month to the Rotary Club of Fallbrook at a recent meeting.

Gordon, with the district since 1988, is the outdoor education teacher at De Luz. He takes all third, fourth and sixth grade students through lessons on ecology, early California and native culture, depending on age level.

Lewellen, with the district since 1987, is a fifth grade teacher at Mary Fay Pendleton. She also provides an after-school enrichment program called “History of Dance” and is the representative to the Visual and Performing Arts Steering Committee.

Teacher of the Month is an ongoing program of Fallbrook Rotary designed to promote excellence in education in the community. For more information, visit [www.fallbrookrotary.org](http://www.fallbrookrotary.org)

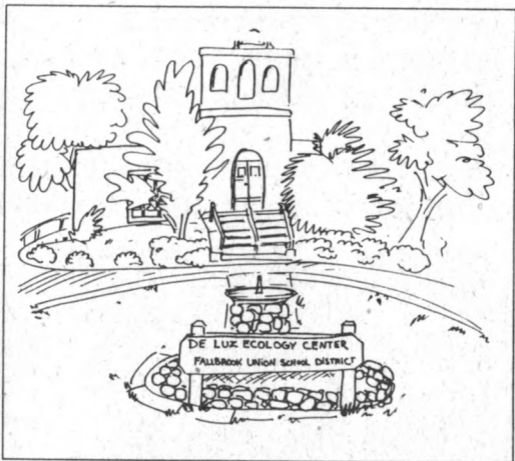
**PROGRAMS**

**FIELD PROGRAMS**

**INTRODUCTION**

# De Luz Ecology Center

***"Adventures  
In Environmental  
Education"***



**Fallbrook Union Elementary  
School District**

**Fallbrook, California**

## PROGRAMS

## FIELD PROGRAMS

## INTRODUCTION

We welcome you and your students to the De Luz Ecology Center. De Luz offers a unique and exciting learning experience that many school districts are unable to give to their students.

The De Luz Ecology Center is a one room school located in an oak woodland. We also have approximately 125 acres of chaparral covered hills with eight miles of trails. Adjacent to the De Luz property is a riparian environment which is ideal for stream study and geology.

The charming De Luz school house, equipped with a kitchen and restroom facilities, is a perfect site for displays and a classroom center for experiments and observations in Environmental Education. Our goals for students attending the De Luz Ecology Center are:

To assist students in developing awareness, knowledge, skills, and responsible action concerning the planet in which all of us live.



**Chaparral**

Participants in this program will become acquainted with the oak woodland and chaparral habitats. An informative three mile hike will give the students an opportunity to learn about the local plant and animal community and the adaptations these plants and animals have made in order to survive in the harsh chaparral environment. The rain-cycle, photosynthesis, fine ecology, inter-relationship between plants and animals and conservation will be emphasized.

**Geology**

California's gold history is the theme for this program. Students will learn about the exciting life led by the 49ers. They will also have an opportunity to actually learn gold panning techniques and gold pan at a local stream. How rocks and minerals are formed as well as an activity in mineral identification are highlights of these students' day.

**Riparian**

The objective of this program is for the students to become familiar with

the characteristics of a riparian environment and the insects that live there. Actively collecting insects and identifying them are highlights of this program.

**Living History**

Students will spend their time in the "one room class" participating in activities that relate to an actual turn-of-the-century school/program. They will sit on benches without desks, write on slates, read from a McGuffey Reader, learn to square dance, and actually participate in activities that students did at the turn of the century. Local Fallbrook history will also be discussed.

**Native Californians**

The students will spend their day learning about California Native Americans that lived in this area. They will go on a short hike and learn about the plants and environment in which these people once lived.

# DeLuz Ecology Center



Nestled among beautiful wooded hills, just 12 miles northeast of Fallbrook, is an educational facility which offers Fallbrook Union Elementary School students an uncommon learning experience that is worlds away from the norm.

It is the DeLuz Ecology Center. ♦



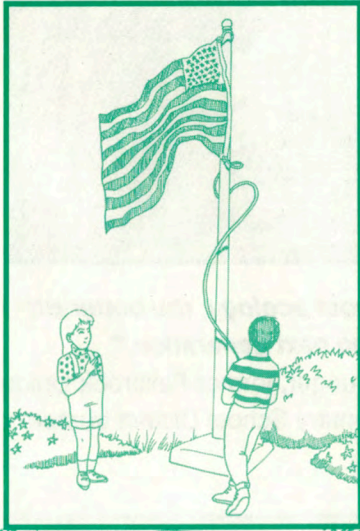
DeLuz  
Ecology  
Center



# Preparing children to be stewards of our land

Third-grade classes, which visit the Center from September through November, take part in a one-day program on the theme of their teacher's choice – living history or the environment.

During their day, third graders can participate in their own flag-raising ceremony,



delve into reading poetry from the McGuffey Reader, try their hand at cursive and math lessons on slates, and have a whirl at square dancing. The youngsters also can briefly live as the Native Americans did – making crafts, baking breads, and hiking trails to study local plants and animals. ♦



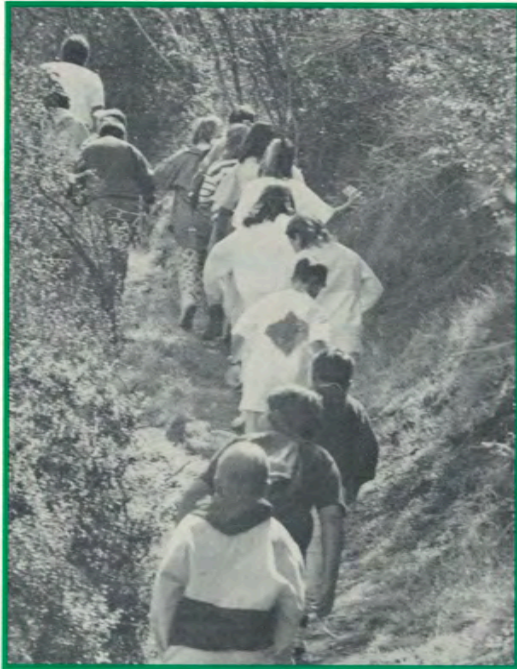
Fifth-grade classes enjoy a four-day program at the Center from November through August. They take an ecological tour of the surrounding trails to learn how animals and plants adapt to their environment. The students study the rain cycle, photosynthesis, the food chain, erosion, and the list goes on.



As with all the DeLuz programs, the students become so wrapped up in dissecting owl pellets, panning for gold and collecting and identifying insects, that they nearly forget they're in school and learning! ♦



# DeLuz Ecology Center needs your support



*"The Center really shows how things relate to the environment. And that knowledge is important if we're going to respect our eco-system."*

— Scott Gordon, ecology center teacher



Each year, more than 1,400 third- and fifth-graders benefit from the museum and science laboratory atmosphere of the old one-room school house and its surrounding 128 acres of undisturbed brush, trees and creeks.

The school house was built in 1926 and regular classes were held there until 1968. It is the perfect setting for the Ecology Center's curriculum designed to develop respect for both local history and the environment.

The Center's philosophy of fun learning really works for these children. They come away with a better understanding of the history of those who lived before us and what we must do to protect our precious resources. The DeLuz Ecology Center helps prepare our youth to become contributing citizens of our world – ready to conserve, recycle, and respect the environment entrusted to them.

The DeLuz Ecology Center is an important program of the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District. The Center is staffed with a teacher, a teacher's aide and one custodian/grounds keeper. Its annual budget is \$98,900.

The Center, however, is endangered. Budget concerns within the District have placed it on the list of possible programs to be curtailed or discontinued.

It appears that only the support of the surrounding community can help the Center continue to offer its exceptional learning experience to Fallbrook students. ♦



*"The more we teach about ecology, the better off we are going to be in the next generation."*

— Walt Krueger, former Fallbrook Union Elementary School District trustee

## **You can help by joining Fallbrook Citizens for the DeLuz Ecology Center**

A group of local parents and other residents who stand behind the DeLuz Ecology Center and what it offers the children have united to form the Fallbrook Citizens for the DeLuz Ecology Center. The group acts as an advisory committee and support group to the Center. They agree that the Center programs are vital to the future of our community and our earth.

If you would like to know how you can help the Fallbrook Citizens for the DeLuz Ecology Center sustain the Center program, please write us at P.O. Box 1362, Fallbrook, CA 92028. ♦

**Fallbrook Citizens for the DeLuz Ecology Center  
P.O. Box 1362, Fallbrook, CA 92028**