



ADVERTISEMENT



POST-TRIBUNE

HAST students perform radio play at the Dunes

By Sue Ellen Ross

Post-Tribune • May 20, 2022 at 7:40 pm

Students from Hammond Academy of Science and Technology (HAST) School recently received more than a textbook education beyond their science classroom.

The teens participated in a recent radio play, in conjunction with the Family Folklore Foundation (FFF). The theme of the project. “Our Big Backyard” reflected history and makeup of the Indiana Dunes, celebrating the natural landscapes of the nearby Miller Woods and the Indiana Dunes National Park.





After arriving at the Douglas Center, the students had a little time to get acquainted with the facility and the surrounding Miller Woods area, since none of them had visited before.

A hike through Miller Woods, was first on the agenda. The 3.5-mile trail led to Lake Michigan and back.

“The presentation (radio play) is an all-volunteer production,” said FFF founder and president Meg DeMakas. “It is a multicultural, intergenerational show about northwest Indiana.”

DeMakas had visited HAST a few months ago, meeting with the students to explain her project. They became interested and decided to participate in the radio play to be staged at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education near the Indiana Dunes.

After arriving at the Douglas Center, the students had a little time to get acquainted with the facility and the surrounding Miller Woods area, since none of them had visited before.

A hike through Miller Woods, was first on the agenda. The 3.5-mile trail led to Lake Michigan and back.



ADVERTISEMENT

StackAdapt

“The weather didn’t co-operate and the students only completed about half of the trail before the rain started,” said FFF member Rebecca Swerdon, who accompanied the group. “But the students stayed positive and headed into the building to start the radio play.”

The cast consisted of voices reflecting not only people instrumental in developing the Indiana Dunes, but the flora and fauna found in the area.

“I’m dressed like a butterfly, I really love

ADVERTISEMENT

StackAdapt

“I’m dressed like a butterfly, I really love them,” said Lily Morley, 7, of Chesterton, as she waited her turn at the microphone. “They are so pretty,”

HAST junior Ariana Avila read her part as Dr. Henry Coles, an historic figure in developing the Indiana Dunes. “His background was very interesting, I learned quite a bit about him.”

A highly-respected University of Chicago professor, Henry Coles, was one of the first people to recognize the biodiversity of the Indiana Dunes.

ADVERTISEMENT

StackAdapt

✕

←


🔒

www.chicagotribune.com

→

⋮

☰

Chicago  Tribune

👤

His love of nature and his studies of plant life in the Dunes proved him as one of America's most influential and extraordinary early ecologists.

His first visit to the Indiana Dunes in 1896 found him fascinated by its natural and evolving environment, as well as its vegetation.

Also during the radio play, HAST sophomore Valerie Guzman was the voice of a Lady Slipper plant, dressed in a tutu for the part. “This experience at the Douglas Center is very interesting,” she said. “We’re getting the chance to see how important this place is, complete with exhibits like a museum.”

✕

ADVERTISEMENT



✕

←


🔒

www.chicagotribune.com

→

⋮

☰

Chicago  Tribune

👤

a tutu for the part. “This experience at the Douglas Center is very interesting,” she said. “We’re getting the chance to see how important this place is, complete with exhibits like a museum.”

The mission of the Family Folklore Foundation (FFF) is to offer learners of all ages unique educational experiences.

For more information about FFF, visit famfolkfound.org or visit the organization on Facebook.

Sue Ellen Ross is a freelance reporter

✕

ADVERTISEMENT

