

# Ferry students see life through new lens

By Mary Anne Brush  
Staff Writer

Looking at objects through the lens of a camera has taught four students at Ferry Elementary School about more than focus, composition, exposure and lighting. It's opened their eyes to viewing the world differently.

"I look at it more in an artistic way," said fifth-grader Alan LaCroix.

"I carry my camera around everywhere I go," said fourth-grader Cailey Hard. "Even at someone's house, there are a bunch of pictures to take."

LaCroix and Hard — along with fourth-grader Spencer Miller and fifth-grader Kaden Connell — joined Ferry's photography club at the beginning of the school year for a variety of reasons. Connell said the club, which meets Thursdays after school, seemed like a fun hobby "because you can get out and move around or just stay inside and do work. It's a good mixture of both for me."

Hard said she got interested in photography after her grandfather gave her a camera.

Spencer said he initially thought photography was boring, but changed his mind when he discovered "you get to take fun pictures and go on trips."

LaCroix was encouraged by his father to join the club. He admits he was resistant at first.

"To be completely honest, at the start I hated it," he said. "Finally I decided to give it a try. I didn't fall in love with it, but I had nothing better to do."

It was adviser Judy Griffith who won him over. Griffith, an assistant in special education, started the club this year due to her own interest in photography, begun in high school and renewed later in life with classes at Macomb Community College.

"The reason why I started (the club) is because I love photography No. 1, and No. 2, I wanted to instill (in students) an appreciation for photography," Griffith said. "There's more to it than point and shoot and selfies."

"Once she had us do all this stuff and it's more than



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUDY GRIFFITH

Members of Ferry's photography club, from left, Spencer Miller, Cailey Hard, Alan LaCroix and Kaden Connell.

just taking pictures, but like angles and stuff, I just fell in love with it," LaCroix said.

One of his favorite projects is close-ups. The challenge, he said, is not zooming in. "It makes it more crisp," he said.

"Before I joined photography club, I took a lot of pictures, but they were kind of nothing and they weren't really that good," said Hard. "When I joined photography club, Mrs. Griffith taught me lots of stuff, so now I take good pictures."

"I didn't realize how many things you could do with photography," Connell said. "I thought it was just 'click.' I know there are lots of aspects in it. Now that I'm part of the photography club, I respect photographers so much more."

Connell also enjoys close-ups along with editing and stop action.

"If someone jumps, you catch a clear photo while they're off the ground," he said. "Or if a bird's flying, you capture it in a nice, clear photo while it's flapping its wings. You at least try to make it clear. Some of us succeeded."

The students' work, which is displayed on a bulletin board in the hallway and on the school website, has received lots of compliments, according to Griffith.

Hard is most proud of two of her nature close-ups.

"One I took out at the nature center where I lay my camera on the ground and there was a flower facing down and I took a picture of it," she said. "Then I was down at the lake. It was when there were huge ice things there. There was a lit-

tle plant growing out of the cement. I put my camera close to the plant and it focused on the plant and the ice was in the background."

One of Connell's favorites is a stop action photo of Hard doing the splits mid-jump. He also has one of raindrops on a spiral slide, in which he said he had fun with perspective.

"I can't really say if it's a picture of the raindrops or a picture of the slide," he said.

Miller, too, said his "best picture is one with Cailey. She had another camera, but she didn't take a picture. She was aiming at it and then I took a picture of that."

The students have explored different aspects of photography such as freeze motion, abstract and macro photography, landscape, natural ice sculptures and product photography. Griffith said she hopes to close the year with portraits and a trip to the Detroit Zoo or Belle Isle. She encourages the students to bring their cameras to school so they don't miss out on that impromptu moment at a special assembly or the classroom.

"I know this is going to be kind of cheesy to say, but let's say you're a tiger or something," LaCroix said. "You've got to have a good eye for prey, but our prey is we have to have a good eye for the photo."

Once he forgot his camera and he regrets it to this day.

"I went on a hike with my babysitter," he said. "I didn't bring my camera. It was an outdoor nature center. I regret not bringing my camera so badly. I could have taken 93 good photos."



PHOTO BY CAILEY HARD



PHOTO BY KADEN CONNELL



PHOTO BY SPENCER MILLER



PHOTO BY ALAN LACROIX



PHOTO BY CAILEY HARD



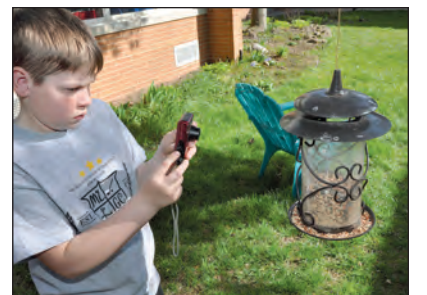
PHOTO BY KADEN CONNELL



PHOTO BY SPENCER MILLER



PHOTO BY ALAN LACROIX



PHOTOS BY RENEE LANDUYT

Clockwise from top left, Cailey Hard works on product photography; Kaden Connell experiments with perspective; Spencer Miller checks out his camera's viewfinder; and Alan LaCroix practices taking close-ups in Ferry's nature center.

# South musical wins honors

Grosse Pointe South High School's recent production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," the Broadway musical based on the story of Joseph from the Bible's Book of Genesis, earned multiple awards from the prestigious Sutton Foster Ovation Awards.

Named for Broadway star and Tony-award winning actress Sutton Foster, the Ovation Awards recognize individual artistry in vocal, dance and acting performances for both male and female lead in a high school musical theater production. It also honors the commitment of Michigan teachers and schools to excellence in performing arts education.

South's all-school musical won the Ovation award for best choreography, according to musical producer and music director Christopher Pratt, crediting longtime choreographer Andy Haines as "the artist who choreographed and staged the entire show." In addition, sophomore Andrew Fleming and senior Hailey Martin



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PORTRAIT PLACE

Grosse Pointe South's production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" earned multiple Sutton Foster Ovation awards.

won the Ovation award for best featured actor and actress, respectively, in a musical. Both have been invited to perform in the Ovation awards performance and be featured in the second act of the production on Sunday, May 20, at The Wharton Center in Lansing.

Junior Tommy Thams and senior Eion Meldrum, who played the lead of Joseph in the dual-cast performances, got a nod

from the Sutton Foster adjudication panel and received nominations for best lead actor in a musical. Thams and Meldrum also received an invitation to compete at the Wharton Center May 20 for the best lead actor award and the chance to go on to the Jimmy Awards in New York City in June.

Each May, high school musical productions and their performers are professionally judged in

local productions for the opportunity to compete on the Wharton Center Cobb Great Hall Stage for a chance to head to Broadway. The lead actor and actress winners compete in the National High School Musical Theater Awards — also known as the Jimmy Awards.

This is the first year South has entered its production into the competition, according to Pratt, which involves inviting

judges to local performances for adjudication.

"I just became aware of the competition this past year and reached out to the organizer for additional information," Pratt said. "This past fall I sent our information in and shortly before the production, I set aside tickets for judges, but never knew if they were in the audience

or not. In a couple of weeks, we are to receive overall comments about the production from those judges who attended and while I am honored that our students and production garnered these awards, I am also interested in feedback that will help our productions become even better in the future."



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