

# Sharing science on Saturday

**Biology fraternity hosts a day of science for elementary students**

BY EMILY WICHMER  
Staff Reporter

Magruder Hall serves many college students as Truman State's science building, but the building recently served as a place for much younger students to learn about science as well.

Beta Beta Beta, the campus biology fraternity, sponsored a day of classes for students from second to fifth grade during an event called "Science on Saturday" on March 2 in Magruder Hall. Members of Tri-Beta and a group of undergraduate volunteers taught classes such as oceanography and psychology. Science on Saturday is Tri-Beta's largest service event of the semester, senior Tri-Beta co-president Aimee Smith said. She said the event's goal was to foster a love of science within young students.

Recently there have been budget cuts for elementary school science departments across the nation, causing science classes to become shorter and less in-depth, Smith said. Science on Saturday serves as a supplement for what the children learn during school, she said.

Smith said she wants the children to understand science isn't scary and to realize that science and math aren't classes only "brainy" kids take. Science on Saturday confirms that, she said.

"During Science on Saturday, when I sit in on a class, I can see the kids participating and being very excited about what they're learning," Smith said. "It's one of the most rewarding parts of the day."

Parents also enjoy the event, Smith said. The last time Tri-Beta hosted the event, parents approached her when they came to pick up their children and thanked her for the fraternity's work, she said. One parent notified Smith's advisor, telling him what a great job they did, Smith said.

Although the event originally began as a senior capstone project about four years ago, Science on Saturday evolved beyond the course and March 2 marked the seventh year Tri-Beta has hosted the event. Since its inception, the fraternity has hosted the event each semester and the number of participants has grown, she said. Rather than invite six or seven schools to participate, she said this semester Tri-Beta branched out and invited 12 schools from northeast Missouri, and approximately 125 children participated.

To accommodate the increase of participants, the number of classes has increased, Smith said. With 18 classes to choose from, students studied specialized topics including chemistry, astronomy, optometry and psychology, Smith said.

Sister Ruth Ann Klauser, Mary Immaculate School principal, said this is the third Science on Saturday Mary Immaculate students have attended. Five of their students participated this semester, Klauser said.

"The children enjoy it because they get to learn science and apply it to their 'regular' classes," she said. "I just want to thank [Tri-Beta] so much for asking us to participate. It's such a great opportunity for the children."

Senior Tri-Beta co-president Wesley Hodges said the increase in number of participants meant more difficulties with coordinat-



Submitted Photo  
Junior Samantha Figg, back right, and senior Megan Howard, front right, show elementary school students a collection of fossils. This semester, Beta Beta Beta invited 12 different schools from northeast Missouri, and approximately 125 children participated in the day of science-based classes for elementary school children.

ing the event. He said Tri-Beta printed and distributed more than 2,000 permission slips to local schools. Contacting schools to gauge interest was a challenge to get done in time, but the hard work was worth it in the end, Hodges said.

"My favorite part of the day is reading the comment cards the kids fill out before they leave," Hodges said. "When asked if they would come back next semester, every single kid replied, 'Yes.' Knowing the kids enjoyed the day and got something out of the experience was the best part for me."

Hodges said another advantage of hosting the event is exposing the children to the camaraderie among college students. He said Science on Saturday is a great way to show the students that Truman and any college or university is a welcoming place they can respect and want to attend.



Submitted Photo  
Senior Yannik Roell explains how to use a microscope to the children attending Science on Saturday. Beta Beta Beta, the campus biology fraternity, sponsored the day of classes for students ranging from second to fifth grade.



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