

THE CAROL J. GREER COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

St. Stephen's Community Church, UCC

1007 Kimberly Drive – Lansing, MI 48912

Phone: 517-706-1905

Serving Lansing Area Families and the Development of At-Risk Youth

NEWSLETTER

February 2022

The Spartan Young Astronomers' Club studies Nebulae

Across the domed planetarium ceiling rolled a video of colorful nebulae --clouds of gas and dust out of which stars were forming or dying. Four activities followed, organized by MSU grad students from their own research.



Nebula Formation--The gas in a nebula can be identified by the color of light emitted. The youth cut out circles of black construction paper which became the "environment" for the various colors of different densities they chose. Squirted onto the paper and spun in a salad dryer, the liquid through its momentum created beautiful nebula-like art, which the young artists took home. **Light Absorption**—

Filters can be used to make visible



only a limited range of color and thereby identify the presence of a specific gas in a cloud of gases. Youth were fascinated by filtering light to hide or show up colored items. **Star Formation**--Styrofoam balls of different sizes and weights were blown around in a cage with a hair dryer. A bowl inside the cage, when full, was weighed to determine what the fusion would have

made—a planet, a star, a comet, etc.

Supernova Explosion—Two different size balls were touching each other with the smaller on top. When dropped, the larger on the bottom, on impact transfers energy to the smaller sending the smaller much farther "off into space" with greater speed. The youth tried it from the floor and also from the stage. Fun!



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A Visit to the Harris Nature Center



The stuffed animals in the Harris Center attracted much attention. But, the Greer Center youth enjoyed the live turtles the most and were intrigued by the different kinds. The fiercest looking one was a large snapping turtle whom the instructor handled with great care. They were surprised he could stick his neck out so long to catch food.



In a plastic container she also showed the youth a slimy salamander.



One of them, when later asked what he had learned there, with amazement he reported that "Some slimes help protect animals." Although very cold that day, the youth also enjoyed the snowy trails. In the same dead tree they saw large Pileated Woodpecker holes and small Downy Woodpecker ones. The birds drilled them in search of food and for nests to raise their young. Another youth commented on seeing lots of animals (rabbits and squirrels). The trip ended with sunshine and pancakes, eggs and sausage at Flap Jack.



The Greer Center, a nonprofit organization, serves the community through the generosity of people like you.

Please help us with a generous donation today.

By check: Mail to St. Stephen's Community Church with Greer Center on the memo line, 1007 Kimberly Dr, Lansing, MI 48912

On-line via our website: St. Stephen's Community Church Lansing. Click on Donate, then Community Outreach Greer Center.

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Thank you for your interest, encouragement and support.