

Look to the skies

World War II planes will be used to train Navy and Army Air Corps pilots at Aurora Municipal Airport this weekend.
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The science of slime-making



Wayne Ratzlaff — Chronicle photo staff

Above: Seth Butcher of North Aurora, left, and Katherine Dudley of Bainbridge Island, Wash., play with the slime each of them made by mixing a few chemicals together during the Young Scholars Camp on Tuesday at Aurora University. Below: Ashton Mackenzie, of Maple Park, keeps a spoon on her nose using water moisture as a gluing agent during the Young Scholars Camp.

'These are gifted kids'



Students attend camp to learn physics, chemistry

By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — Ashton Mackenzie wrinkled her nose as she added guar gum to the beaker of water.

"Ooh, it smells bad. It smells like rotting potatoes and flour," said Ashton, 10, as she sniffed the beaker.

But as the young scientist from Maple Park soon learned Tuesday, guar gum mixed with water and saturated Borax solution makes some-

thing that is fun to play with — slime.

"I'm turning into a frog," 8-year-old Garrett Patterson of Sugar Grove said as he spread his slime across his hand.

Demonstrating how flexible it was, Garrett easily rolled the slime across a table.

Seth Butcher, 10, of North Aurora, started jiggling his slime between his hands.

"This is so cool," Seth said. "It feels gooey. It feels like Jell-O."

In addition to fun, the youngsters are learning about physics and chemistry this week as part of Aurora University's Young Scholars Camp for gifted youth.

The Naperville-based Packer Foundation sponsors the camp.

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Scholars: Students learn about scientific observation

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"These are gifted kids that are very smart. They pick up on a lot of things," said instructor James Swedler, a West Aurora High School chemistry and biology teacher.

Swedler told the students

that the guar gum is what made the substance behave like Jell-O, even though it is 96 percent water.

And as the youngsters learned, guar gum is found in items such as ice cream and toothpaste.

"It comes from a plant. It is part of the guar gum plant,"

Swedler told the students.

Haley O'Brien, 10, of Aurora, was amazed what her slime could do.

"Look, I can make it dance," Haley said as her slime did a little jig.

But Ashton could not make her slime do everything, despite her best efforts.

"I have created a slime that will obey me. Get me a sandwich," Ashton said to it.

It did not even flinch.

Swedler taught the youngsters how to think and act like a scientist.

"I am trying to teach them scientific methods of observation," Swedler said.