

Article published Feb 7, 2010

Families flock to Science Alive! At St. Joseph County Library **Science, health technology are focus of annual event.**

By MARGARET FOSMOE *Tribune Staff Writer*

SOUTH BEND -- Robert Redding glanced through a microscope and saw tiny moving objects. His eyes grew big.

It was the 6-year-old's first experience with the microscopic world, and he could see tiny brine shrimp -- also known as sea monkeys -- swimming in a solution at an exhibit run by the Michiana Aquarium Society.

Hundreds of families, many with small children, turned out ***Saturday at the St. Joseph County Public Library*** for the 18th annual Science Alive!, a daylong celebration of learning about science and technology. Visitors poured into the downtown library to see exhibits and participate in hands-on activities.

"Science is fun," said Destiney Mason, 12, of South Bend, who served as both a volunteer and a participant during Saturday's activities. She stood in rapt attention as Indiana University South Bend education student Allison Jones, of Elkhart, demonstrated characteristics of polymers using a long chain and a plastic cup. Destiney said math is her favorite subject in school, with science a close second. Nearby, brothers Gage Reese, 8, and Nathan Hollingsworth, 3, of Buchanan, touched a balloon and an aluminum can together to observe the effects of static electricity.

Representatives of ***HealthWorks Kids' Museum*** led children through a series of team competitions in the library auditorium to teach them how to develop strong hearts and lungs. The children learned about the importance of eating at least five fruits and vegetables each day, and the impact good nutrition can have on health.

At a booth for ***Prairie Winds Nature Farm***, visitors were able to hand-grind grain into flour and hold heritage-variety live chickens. The working educational farm near Lakeville teaches visitors about earth-friendly farming, sustainability and raising heritage animal breeds.

At an exhibit manned by the University of Notre Dame student chapter of the ***Earthquake Engineering Research Institute***, visitors saw scale models of buildings and how they would be affected by the motion of an earthquake. As the base moved, the models swayed.

Staff writer Margaret Fosmoe: mfosmoe@sbtinfo.com (574) 235-6329