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Hopkins Hill kids show they're glad to be 'Born in the U.S.A.'

Amanda K. Lowe , Daily Times

COVENTRY - School was closed last Monday in honor of Memorial Day but several local kindergarteners said they spent the holiday preparing for a patriotic celebration.

The students were making their final preparations for the fourth annual "Born in the U.S.A. Performance" they put on for their parents, friends, and Coventry School administrators during the school day on Wednesday.

"We have worked really hard on this performance," said Christine Nelson, kindergarten teacher at Hopkins Hill Elementary School. "We started learning the songs at the beginning of the school year. Three months ago, each student chose a state, researched their states and memorized three facts about them. They then came into school and wrote about their states. It was a lot of work and they had a lot of fun doing it."

After learning information about the states, the students colored maps and the state flags of their states, Nelson said.

"I showed the students different scenic pictures from around the country and asked them to write descriptive sentences about them," Nelson said. "They got so into it, I was amazed. They started having discussions about things they learned about their states and actually pinpointing what states the scenic pictures could be from. They really learned a lot."

At Wednesday's performance, the students presented their states by reading the facts they learned.

"Virginia was founded in 1788," said Megan Busby during her presentation. "The capital of Virginia is Richmond. The bird is the cardinal."

The students recited trivia such as the capitals, sizes, state birds, state foods, and state flowers.

"The bird is the robin," said Michael Lussier of his chosen state, Connecticut. "Its factories make submarines, silverware, and clocks."

"Maine is so big you can fit all the other New England states into it," said Hannah Gebler during her presentation.

"Hawaii is a chain of islands," said Celine Brodeur. "The capital is Honolulu. Surfing was invented by

the Hawaiian people."

The students all had different reasons for picking their states. Some students knew relatives in certain states, some knew interesting facts about other states, some had traveled to states, and some wanted to visit certain states.

Dakota Reyes said she chose South Dakota because it had her name in it.

James Marsocci said he chose Rhode Island simply because it is the state he lives in.

Other states represented were Arizona by Seth Burton, New Hampshire by Abigail Harvey, Idaho by Sierra Reyes, Alaska by Grace Mischler, Vermont by Calia Howard, New York by McKenzie Thibodeau, Iowa by Anthony Germano, Florida by Brandon Machado, Georgia by Robert Scalisi, Texas by David Rexter, Washington by Richard Lossasso, and Arkansas by Erica Bader.

The students not only presented facts about their states, they also sang several patriotic songs such as "Yankee Doodle," "Star Spangled Banner," "You're a Grand Ole Flag," "America the Beautiful," "This Land," "My Country 'Tis of Thee," "This is My Country," and "God Bless the USA."

"I was a little scared," said Gadge Mello, who presented Alabama. "I didn't want to forget the words of the songs."

Many of the students said they were proud at the completion of their performance and that they learned a lot.

"I had fun," said Theresa Barden, who presented Pennsylvania. "I learned about my state and a lot of other states from my friends."

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