



UNION ELEMENTARY fourth graders Sarah Spayd, Gena Best, Kelsie Keylor, Denise Bozeman, Angela Miragliotta, Ashley Gray, B.J. Stanley and Heather Culler and their teacher, Dayna Ramsey-Sanders, show off the results of their embryology project.

'Egg-spectant' Students Saw Ducklings And Chicks Hatch

BY SUSAN USHER

It must be spring. All across Brunswick County "egg-spectant" students have been watching and listening the past several weeks for signs of new life, the pipping of ducklings and chicks.

Tuesday morning, in the Supply Elementary School courtyard, fourth grade student Trenton Burney carefully slipped two fluffy yellow, loudly peeping ducklings into a shoebox punched with air holes. He proudly carried the box through Annie Bryant Hewett's class, stopping to allow classmates to peek inside. At the door, he reluctantly said goodbye to his father, Alvin Burney, and the ducks. After about a month in the warmth of a storage room, the ducks will join goats and bantams in a field at the Burney home near Supply.

At Supply Elementary, Hewett and fellow kindergarten teachers Ramona Parker, Cathy Milligan and Pam Jackson repeated a project that was a big success last year at what was then Union Primary School. With the help of volunteer Dr. Pat Hewett, a local chiropractor with a background in biology and a love of animals, they hatched duck and chicken eggs in incubators in each classroom. Every student marked his or her "own" egg and had the option of taking one home, should their parents agree and come to school to get the bird.

This week, a surplus of birds meant other students also had a chance to do the same, for a small charge.

Parents raised the money for Dr. Hewett to buy the eggs and the feed was donated. In addition, community volunteers donated more chicken eggs when they found out about the project, said Hewett. "It looks like we've got about 50 kinds of chickens, including African game hens."

Yellow, cream, white, black, gray, striped and even calico-type biddies huddled under a lamp in their own private section of the pen at Supply. In the larger area outside, several hundred baby ducks scampered from one side of the pen to the other, wherever the most students gathered.

"The ducks really bond with the children, better than the chicks do," said Hewett.

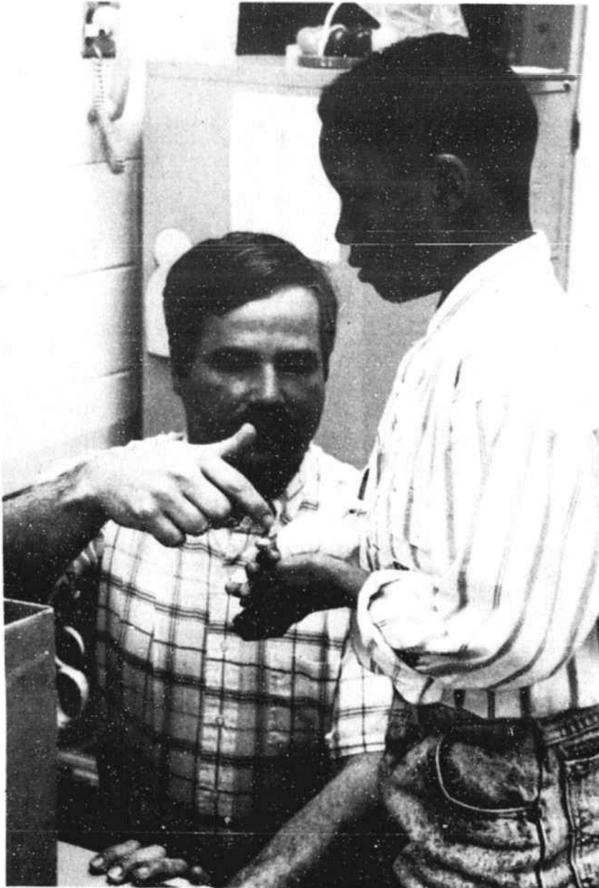
Not every county student who watched a young bird "pip" will get to take one home.

In fourth-grade classrooms at Bolivia, Supply and Union Elementary schools, and in the EMH class at South Brunswick High, students were participating in a 4-H Embryology School Enrichment Program sponsored by Brunswick County 4-H.

In the embryology program, Brunswick County 4-H provided classes with about a dozen eggs each, incubators, food for the newborn chicks, lesson plans, handouts and a video. A \$250 minigrant from Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. helped with purchase of equipment, while a commercial hatchery provided the eggs.

"It was a hands-on kind of thing," said Billy Privette, Brunswick County 4-H agent. "The kids all got involved with turning the eggs and that kind of thing."

Privette said newborn birds in the embryology program didn't go home with individual students. "We've found that people in the poultry business get upset with that kind of thing," he said. Add to that the fact that most families don't have the knowledge or the space needed to maintain appropriate tem-



BRUNSWICK COUNTY 4-H Agent Billy Privette shares information with Corey Daniels, a fourth grade student at Supply Elementary.

peratures for the birds as they mature.

Because so many hatchlings had died from lack of care and neglect, retail businesses in North Carolina can no longer sell young birds or rabbits at Easter. So the 4-H chicks are going to either Indigo Farms near Hickman's Crossroads or to another location near Boiling Spring Lakes.

The 4-H project was piloted in the four schools this year and Privette hopes to expand the program to all fourth grade classrooms in the county next year.

He said that fluctuations in temperature and humidity at Union Elementary may have contributed to the low hatching success rate there, with eggs in two classrooms not hatching at all. It's a problem he hopes to address quickly so that students and teachers at Union will be enthusiastic about participating again next year.

"It was kind of discouraging for me," said Privette, "so I know it was for them."

In both programs, teachers have used the eggs and the chicks as the focus of lessons in not only life science, but other subject areas as well.

"They had fun thinking of names and writing poems," said Dayna Ramsey-Sanders, one of the Union Elementary teachers whose class participated in the 4-H project.

Ramona Parker's kindergarten class at Supply videotaped a duckling as it hatched and showed the film to the rest of the school. Students also drew ducks and chicks, wrote about them and even used them in math class, counting the days since the eggs were placed in the incubator March 1.

According to Justin Hewett, it



CHECKING OUT the chicks and ducklings at Supply Elementary are Ramona Parker's kindergarten students (from left) Lorna Marlowe, Brandon Helms, Christopher Marlowe, Tanya Arnold, Jessica Hewett, Derrick Mitchell and Zackary Gible.

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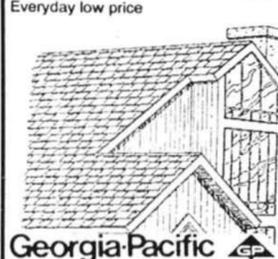
PUBLIC NOTICE

The Town of Holden Beach will hold a public hearing to hear comments on the assessments of the cost of dredging the canals at Holden Beach Harbor and Heritage Harbor at 7:00 P.M. on April 21, 1993 at Town Hall.

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