

## Teacher Has 'NEWEST' Ideas To Share With Students

Geraldine Kepley has a lot to share with her sixth grade science students at Leland Middle School this fall.

She recently completed a 10-day honors workshop for elementary school teachers at the NASA Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., sponsored by NASA and the National Science Teachers Association.

Kepley is in her 18th year of teaching, but last year was her first time teaching science full-time. She loves science, but needed help in helping students understand the importance of math and science and bringing the subject to life for them.

Looking for that assistance, Kepley applied for the workshop, successfully competing with hundreds of other teachers for one of 23 spots in the NASA Educational Workshop for Elementary School Teachers (NEWEST) at Langley. Nearly 100 other outstanding elementary teachers attended similar workshops at one of four other Agency centers across the nation.

The program is a unique combination of scientific and technological information and hands-on experience. During the two weeks the teachers learned about cutting-edge NASA projects, visited NASA facilities, attended seminars presented by 36 NASA researchers, engineers and technicians and studied topics ranging from aeronautics to interplanetary exploration.

A portion of the program was devoted to NEWEST Sharing, in which teachers shared ideas and strategies for translating their experiences into invaluable classroom material.

"We did so much," said Kepley. "I'm basical-

ly going to be doing new units for my classes using the NEWEST format."

That format includes plenty of interdisciplinary approaches, for one. "We were shown a lot of ways to incorporate reading and writing and math especially into our activities," she said. She will also be sharing ideas and skills with fellow teachers during staff development workshops.

PBS is one example of the NEWEST approach. PBS stands for not Public Broadcasting System, but Picture Book Science, in which the teacher uses a "really good picture book" to introduce the theme of the unit or lesson. The pictures and information sparks children's interest and imaginations and helps them approach the subject in a more creative fashion.

Then there are field TRIPs, that take students farther inside a subject rather than outside the school. TRIP is the acronym for Theory and Research In Practice, a hands-on activity that relates to the daily lesson theme.

When the teachers studied aerodynamics, they did more than read about its principles. They learned how the theory is applied in air flight. The educators did everything short of flying a NASA T-38 chase and test pilot plane, going through pre-flight inspection, cockpit familiarization and aircrew safety equipment orientation.

At a Hampton area flying field, during another hands-on exercise, Kepley was also one of two teachers who got to take the controls of a glider for 45 seconds.

The NEWEST approach concludes with "Wrap-Up Wonder," time deliberately set aside

for learners to reflect on what they have read and experienced and how it can be applied.

"Reflection is very important to retention of material," said Kepley, though too often not enough time is allowed for it in the public school curriculum.

The NEWEST program was designed in the wake of a national study that indicates if students have not developed an interest in math or science by the third grade, their chances of doing so decrease over time. NEWEST was created to encourage students' enthusiasm for math and science by engaging their teachers in an exciting program that can be easily transferred across the elementary curriculum.

If Kepley's enthusiasm is contagious, Leland Middle School should have a lot of eager sixth grade scientists this fall.

### Training Offered In Leland

The Brunswick County Literacy Council has scheduled a free tutor training workshop in the North Brunswick area for Friday, Aug. 13, from 6-9:30 p.m. and Saturday, Aug. 14, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Leland Community Center.

Joan Altman will be trainer. Participants who complete both sessions will be qualified to teach people using the phonics-based, one-on-one Laubach method. There will be no charge for the workshop.

Participants should bring a bag lunch on Saturday. Coffee and soft drinks will be provided.

Those planning to attend must pre-register by calling the literacy council at 743-7323 or writing to BCLC, P.O. Box 6, Supply NC 28472.



NASA PHOTO  
LELAND MIDDLE SCHOOL science teacher Geraldine Kepley didn't get to fly this NASA P-38, but checking out the training jet did add to her understanding of aerodynamics during a workshop aimed at helping teachers bring science to life for their students.

## Proper Lawn Irrigation Cuts Plant, Water Waste

Much of the water used to irrigate lawns is improperly applied resulting in waste, added cost, and unhealthy plants.

Turf grasses are able to withstand prolonged periods of drought. For this reason it is not necessary to water lawns such as tall fescue turf in the summer to prevent turf loss, provided it is allowed to go dormant.

The brown, withered leaves are normal signs of dormancy and you should not be alarmed when this occurs. Lawns allowed to go dormant should be watered every three weeks in the absence of rain to prevent turf loss from heat and drying.

Never allow a lush, actively growing lawn to go dormant without slowly easing it into dormancy. This can be accomplished by deep and infrequent watering, by mowing at a high height of cut, by insuring adequate amounts of potassium are present, especially in sandy soils, and by not overfertilizing with nitrogen.

Cool season grasses such as tall fescue, Kentucky blue grass and rye grass should not be fertilized in the summer.

The following tips apply to homeowners who prefer to water their lawns throughout the summer. Keep in mind that this procedure must be continued throughout the summer

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once the decision is made to maintain actively growing grass. Otherwise turf loss can be expected.

Only apply water to lawns that show signs of moisture stress. A dark bluish-gray color, footprints that remain for some time after walking, and wilted, folded, or curled leaves are indications that it is time to water. Delay in watering at first signs of wilt can result in permanent damage.

The best time to water is in the early morning hours. This reduces the risk of disease and loss of water from evaporation and is done at a time when there is a low demand for water.

If evening is the most practical time for you, water in early evening to allow the foliage to dry before

nightfall. This will lessen the chance of disease. Avoid mid-afternoon watering to reduce loss from evaporation.

Water to a depth of 4 inches to 6 inches to encourage deep rooting. Probing with a screw driver can help determine moisture depth. Usually 1 inch of water applied at one time each week will supply the necessary amount. Avoid light, frequent watering except when establishing new lawns. Cans or a rain gauge can be used to determine how much water is being delivered in a certain period of time. (It takes 640 gallons of water to apply 1 inch of water/1,000 sq. ft.)

Clay soils accept water slowly, requiring the metering of water to prevent wasteful runoff. Water clay soils until runoff occurs; wait one-half hour until water is absorbed, and rewater until the desired depth or amount is obtained. This same technique can be used for slopes and compacted soils. Few lawns estab-

lished on clay soils can absorb more than one-half inch of water per hour.

Sandy soils require more frequent watering, so applying one-half inch of water every third day is usually enough. Adjust automatic irrigation systems to supplement natural rainfall so that the lawn is not overwatered. Mowing lawns at recommended mowing height, for example, tall fescue at 3 inches, will enhance rooting depth.

Remember to help conserve one of our most precious resources—water—by using it efficiently and wisely.

Send your gardening questions and comments to The Plant Doctor, P. O. Box 109, Bolivia, N.C. 28422.

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### Take Bus To 'Y' Day Camp

Children who live in the Bolivia area can catch a bus from Bolivia Elementary School to YWCA summer day camp in Wilmington.

The bus leaves the school at 7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday at 7:30 a.m., said Barbara Jo Lineberger, executive director. However, children may arrive at school as early as 7 a.m.

After arriving at the YWCA at 8:30 a.m., they participate in indoor

and outdoor games, swimming, crafts, films and other activities. Children are to bring their lunch and snacks, bathing suits and towels.

Brunswick County children leave at 4:30 p.m., arriving at Bolivia Elementary School at 5:30 p.m. Children are to be picked up by 6 p.m.

Call the YWCA at 1-919-799-6820 for information on costs, YWCA membership, registration and transportation.

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