

Weekender

Children's Page

WHITCHURCH-HIGHLANDS

Self-watering plant system

By DENISE McDONALD
 Every time Deanna Solomon and her family have gone on holidays, they've had to find someone to water their plants. That is, until Deanna and school mate Kim McClure devised a means of watering their household flora without neighborly assistance.
 "I started seriously thinking about the problem when my parents couldn't find anyone to come in," says 14-year-old Deanna. "One day while I was reading about capillaries, I decided to see if a piece of string could water a plant. What I found was if you put the string in a glass of water with the other end in the plant pot, it keeps the soil moist for several days."
 Taking their concept further, Deanna and Kim developed this unique method of watering vegetation into a Science Fair project entitled "The Capillary Effect" and entered it at Whitchurch-Highlands School, Thursday.
 "We were both interested in seeing what materials had the

most capillaries or hair-like tubes," says Kim, 13. "We also wanted to test the force of gravity on liquid through small tubes."
 "I always wanted to know about veins and how the blood goes through them," continues Deanna. "You can look at a plant for hours, yet not know how the water moves up the stem. I wanted to know how water feeds things."
 According to both girls, much of their information was taken from science encyclopedias, physics dictionaries and their Grade 8 Science text book.
 "The capillary effect was discovered by a man who left a dry towel by a sink of water," explains Deanna. "When he came back the next morning, the water had crept through the towel and there was a big puddle on the floor."
 Deanna and Kim claim they tested this theory by placing a stick of celery in two glasses of red and blue food coloring. After waiting an hour, the celery appeared lined with colored streaks.

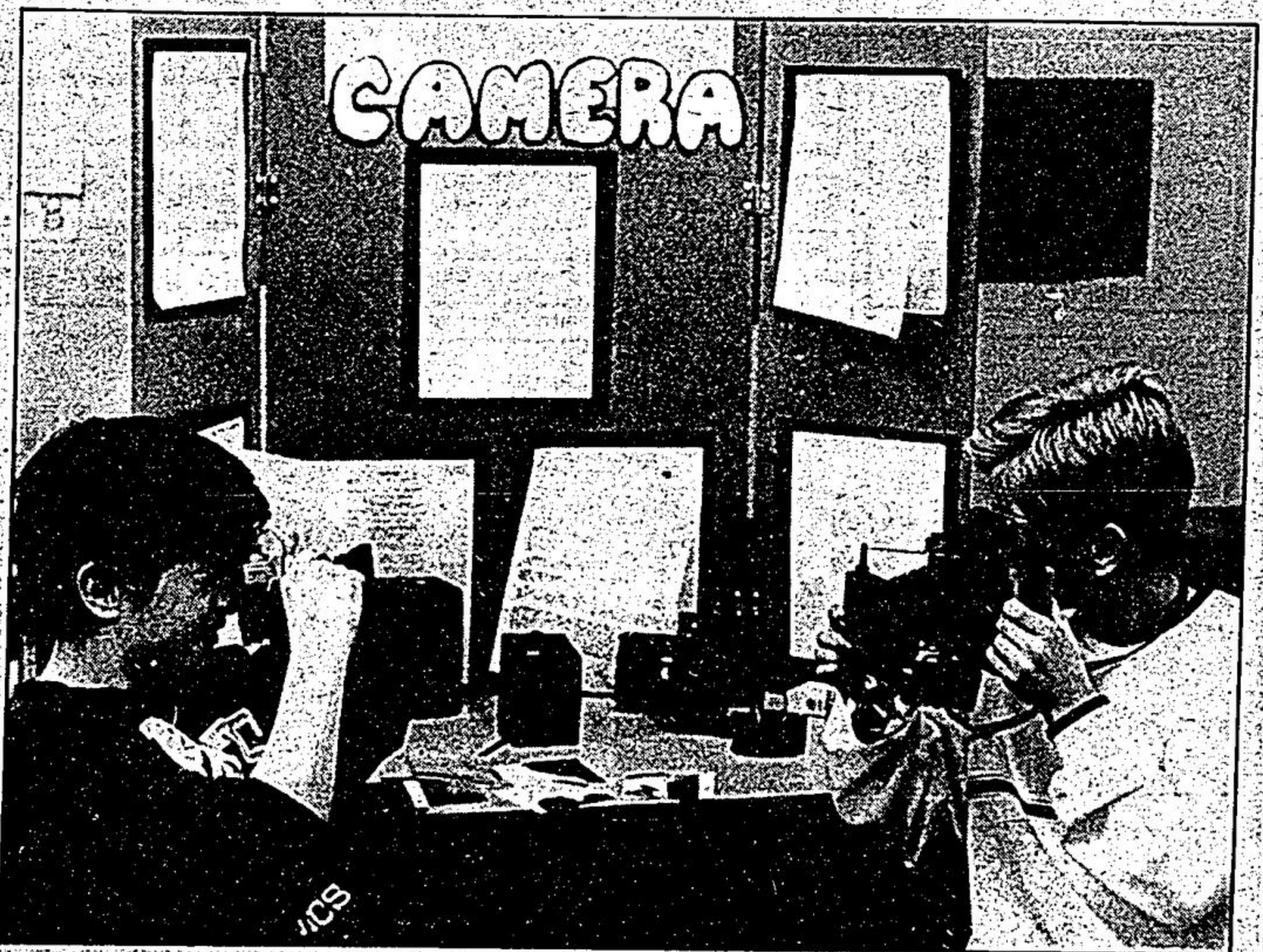
Gym and recess

The kids love it

By DENISE McDONALD
 The gymnasium and recess were common responses from 21 Whitchurch-Highlands' students when asked the question "what is it that makes your school special?"
 "The gym is the best thing because I like running around in it at recess when they don't turn on the lights. It's so big and dark inside," says Grade 3 student Abe Choi.
 Tommy Randall, Grade 4, agrees with Abe's choice because, "You can yell and scream your head off while inside it but not get in trouble with the teachers."
 "The gym is the place we get to do all the fun things we want, like workouts and lots of exercises. We can really go hyper," says Gary Hisey, Grade 4.
 However, recess appears to be a favorite among the younger students of Grades 1, 2 and 3.
 "Recess is the best thing about our school because you get to do whatever you want," says Grade 3 student Neil Kapoor.
 Seven-year-old Stephanie Kirstein adds: "It's the best because there's some ice outside and you can skate on it. I also like when we go to this place every year where they have nice skating ice too."
 Although the students seem equally divided between the gymnasium and recess as a speciality aspect of Whitchurch-Highlands, all grades share the same feeling about school spirit.
 "We all care for each other here, we're all friends," says Dawn Britten, Grade 4.
 "It's a small school and you know everybody. All my friends are here and there's always somebody to play with at recess," continues Grade 7 student Jenny Smart.
 Not to be forgotten was the library and Science Fair ranking closely as third and fourth 'special' choices.
 According to Christa Hisey, Grade 3 and Josie Smith, Grade 4, their favorite place is the library because "It has all their favorite books, like Pippi Longstocking, and is where they can obtain lots of information for their Science Fair projects."
 "We all win prizes at the Science Fair sometimes," says Angela Sweet, Grade 4, "Our school only lost once."
 Chris Dale, also of Grade 4 says, "We learn a lot when we make up our Science Fair projects and get to do lots of really neat research."
 "We also like our teacher Miss Orr because she's nice and we don't get in trouble all that much," says Tanya Schatzmann, Alisa Leece and Katherine Wright all of Grade 1.



Thursday was Science Fair Day at Whitchurch-Highlands Public School in Whitchurch-Stouffville. Many interesting exhibits were on display including one on 'The Eye' completed by Esther Adams, 12, (left), and Sonia Choi, 13, both of Grade 8. --Denise McDonald



Cameras old and new, large and small never cease to intrigue young scientists. Michael Groves, (left), and Michael Empringham chose this subject for their display. The next level of competition is Area 'F' at Ramer Wood Public School in Markham, Feb. 26. --Denise McDonald

Youthful scientists

By DENISE McDONALD
 What once was merely another project in a long line of endless public school assignments is once again illustrating the creativity and ingenuity that lies beneath the surface of students' abilities today.
 With numerous projects representing talent from every grade, Whitchurch-Highlands School opened the doors Thursday on its annual Science Fair competition.
 According to Melanie Dryer, 14, she chose her project topic "The Effect of Sound on Plants" to illustrate how different types of music affect the growth of plants.
 After subjecting two plants of the same variety to the sounds of CHAY and CFTR, Melanie says: "The soft music made the plant grow taller because it was in a relaxing atmosphere. The other

plant was still healthy but it didn't grow as large because of the louder music."
 With an equally impressive science display, Michael Groves and Mike Empringham, both 14, based their project on cameras to demonstrate "the effects they can have on someone's future employment."
 "I thought it would make an interesting topic to research because it can help me in the future if I want to obtain a position in photography," says Michael.
 "Mike, who claims his favorite past-time is drawing adds: "You can use a camera to capture a scene and later draw it."
 Winners in this area of competition exhibited their work in the Area 'F' competition at Ramer Wood Public School, Markham, Feb. 26.