



Hannah Clarkin • Daily Times

Students in Christine Nelson's Hopkins Hill kindergarten classroom put on a show for parents yesterday when they presented patriotic songs and facts about the states that they have been studying this spring. Here, Barry Burdick tells everyone a little bit about New Mexico. Nathan Coppola (below) got his turn to share all he knew about Michigan.

Hopkins Hill kids get patriotic

HANNAH CLARKIN

hclarkin@ricentral.com

COVENTRY — Parents of Hopkins Hill kindergarten students got a free concert before taking their children home yesterday afternoon.

Red, white and blue streamers, stars, and flags transformed Christine Nelson's classroom into a small theatre. Desks were cleared away to make the front area into a stage. The twenty-three students sang patriotic songs, lead their parents in the pledge of allegiance, and taught short lessons on the United States.

Wearing flag-themed hats and sashes bearing the name of the state they were representing, each student came to the front of the classroom to stand on a small stool and speak directly into the microphone.

Representing Hawaii, Michigan, Montana, Tennessee, Colorado, Texas, New Hampshire, California, New Mexico, Louisiana, Nevada, Florida, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Alaska, Oklahoma, Vermont, Arizona, Alabama, Maryland, and Rhode Island, the morning kindergarten class covered at least half of the country, the afternoon class took up the rest of the country.

They have been practicing since January, said Teacher Assistant Barbra Franzen of the kindergarten class. Franzen is a foster grandmother of one of the students, and Nelson is her daughter.

This is the fifth year that the kindergarten has put this program together, Franzen said, and it was set on this Friday specifically for Memorial Day.

From the beginning of the spring school year, students pick states to learn about, Franzen said. "They color in a map, they have to go home and find out three facts about their state. And then they write out their



facts on the back of the map."

They have practiced once or twice a week since the project began, Franzen said.

Although, this week, they practiced giving their performance to all of the other classrooms in the school, just so their presentation to their parents would be extra good.

All the students knew the songs by heart and enthusiastically belted out the words and signed some of the motions. They made their entrance to "Yankee Doodle," transitioned into the "Star Spangled Banner" and then "You're A Grand Ole' Flag" as they waved flags and their parents snapped pictures.

Colin Edgette led everyone in the pledge of allegiance, holding a big flag at the front of the stage.

When the pledge was done, Nelson quizzed the stu-

dents about what they should do with it.

"Can we just put it on a chair or lie it on the floor?" she asked.

The students couldn't quite remember what the answer was right away. A couple of them hesitantly told her that would be ok.

"We have to hang it up," she reminded them. "You can't just put the American Flag any old place."

The program included singing "America the Beautiful," "This Land," "My Country, 'Tis of Thee", "This is My Country", and closing with "God Bless the USA."

Carolyn Costa and Mary Woodruff also assisted Nelson with the class.

Students left with red, white and blue popsicles supplied by Anthony Losasso's family.