Durbin Estates Learning Laboratory

VFTH

5/22/14

Mother Nature provided a huge opportunity for some fourth grade students to learn important environmental lessons.

Amy Bingham takes us to an outdoor classroom in this week’s View from the Hill.

Green infrastructure, karst environments and protecting water quality. Pretty big concepts for ten year olds to grasp but WKU’s Center for Environmental Education and Sustainability teaches it in a way that’s easy to understand.

Dr. Terry Wilson \ Director, CEES

Nancy Givens \ Coordinator, CEES

Werenis Bruno Sanchez \ 4th Grader

Amanda Hadden \ 4th Grader

“It’s an open area with a good habitat for animals.”

Durbin Estates doubles as a learning laboratory for these students from Parker Bennett Curry.

“Kids were saying this is neat., I thought these were weeds but there’s all sorts of plants and flowers here.”

Sponges help demonstrate how the large retention basin works to slow and filter pollution out of water that runs off here from hundreds of acres of Bowling Green city streets.

“The activities selected helped reinforce the concepts that we’re implementing on a much larger, macro schedule here on site.”

Across the street, the new Dishman McGinnis School opens in August which will mean lots more location learning for students.

“We hope they use us on a regular basis with their science classes but also other classes to learn about habitat, green infrastructure, green building and natural eco system services.”

The first of 43 mixed-income, mixed use green affordable housing has already been built and this bridge constructed by WKU’s Habitat for Humanity chapter will cross the drainage channel and connect trails.

“I would like to visit here more often because I live close to here.”

That’s music to Wilson’s ears who says just getting students away from electronics these days is a big step.

“We have so many kids in our culture these days that are spending very little time outside. “

Outside where mother nature has lots of important lessons.

“Plants, they can soak up water and give us oxygen and I think that’s a big deal. Trees are a big deal.”

TAG-

An end-of-grant gathering to commemorate the Durbin Estates statewide demonstration project is planned for June 5th at 9 am.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

###