

First-graders drilled on dental health

All Kids Dental hosts Marshdale students

By CHELSY WOODS KLEIN
For the Times

What do you get when you take 50 first-graders to the dentist's office? If the kids are visiting All Kids Dental, the answer is fun, not fear.

As part of National Children's Dental Health Month, Dr. Brie Pyszka, 29, of Evergreen and her staff at All Kids Dental hosted about 50 first-graders from Marshdale Elementary School for a dental-health awareness day on Jan. 29.

As the kids entered the office, their eyes — as opposed to their mouths — opened wide as they took in the over-the-top jungle theme. Many couldn't help exclaiming "Whoa!" — not the expression one might anticipate from a 6-year-old entering a dentist's office.

The students were invited to explore each of the "stations," which included:

- Dentist for a Day, where the kids took turns lying in the exam chair and "examining" each other's teeth just as the dentist would.
- The giant toothbrush station, where the students dressed up as

All Kids Dental

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Evergreen, CO 80439
Phone/website: 303-670-KIDS (5437);
www.allkidsjungle.com
Hours: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m. to noon.

teeth and used a giant toothbrush to "brush" their teeth.

- The good foods/ bad foods station, where the students separated foods that are good for teeth from those that aren't.

First-grade teacher Donna Hanish of Evergreen was excited about bringing her students to All Kids Dental for the oral oratory.

"(This) is an environment that is conducive to learning (about dental health), rather than just sitting and listening to somebody," Hanish said, adding that dental health becomes part of the curriculum come February because her students are at an age where they are more able to take care of themselves — and brushing their teeth is a crucial part of that personal hygiene regimen.

"It was really fun," said Kamber Schmidt, 6, of Evergreen. "I like the jungle."

Kamber and her classmates were challenged to count each other's teeth as part of the Dentist



Photo by CHELSY WOODS KLEIN | The Courier

FIRST-GRADER KAMBER SCHMIDT, 6, of Evergreen gets a squirt of water from business manager Carol Henry during a field trip to All Kids Dental.

for a Day exam, and then it was off to the monkey tooth brushing station, where the kids brushed and flossed a silly-looking monkey with oversized choppers.

All Kids Dental is a pediatric dental office designed to entrance kids with its jungle theme. From the slide in the waiting room to the jungle animals throughout the entire office, kids are enchanted, rather than scared, which is just

what Pyszka was aiming for when she and her father, Dr. Robert Henry, opened the clinic last August.

"The jungle theme takes away that natural anxiety over going to the dentist," Pyszka said.

Both doctors are pediatric specialty dentists, which means they have completed two years of extra training. They see only kids at All Kids Dental — no adults

allowed in these exam chairs — but unlike many dental offices, "parents are allowed to accompany their children through the dental experience," Pyszka said.

Pyszka and her staff strive to create "the triangle of trust," where the doctors, the parents and the patient work together to foster lifelong dental health.

"The goal is to have happy, healthy dental patients," she said.

Pine beetles attacked forest at increasing rate in '09

Forest services report 524,000 acres newly infested in 2009, compared to 400,000 in 2008, based on aerial survey

By VICKY GITS
Staff Writer

The bark beetle continued to chew its way through Colorado's and Wyoming's lodgepole pine forests at the rate of 524,000 new acres in 2009, a 32 percent increase over 2008.

The numbers were announced Jan. 22 at a news conference at which the Colorado State Forest Service and the U.S. Forest Service unveiled the results of the annual forest health aerial survey highlights for the previous year.

The total number of acres infected is up to 3.6 million in the

Rocky Mountain region since the first signs of the outbreak in 1996. In 2008, about 400,000 acres were newly affected.

In 2009 most of the new bark beetle activity was recorded north and east of the Continental Divide in northern Colorado and in the Snowy and Laramie ranges of southern Wyoming.

Larimer County experienced the biggest increase, almost doubling in size from 280,000 to 500,000 acres. The Medicine Bow and Roosevelt national forests experienced the largest growth of 116,000 and 214,000 acres, respectively, the forest services said.

The numbers represent a significant decrease from the worst year, 2007, when about 600,000 additional acres were attacked. Foresters think that normal precipitation is making some trees more resilient.

Lodgepole are the most vulnerable trees, but ponderosa and bristlecone are not immune.

"While lodgepole pines continue to be the tree of choice, we are finding pockets of ponderosa and limber and bristlecone pines infected as well," says a news release from the U.S. Forest Service and the Colorado State Forest Service.

majority of the standing trees are ponderosa, which have been relatively disease-free compared to the lodgepole, which accounts for the sweeping devastation in Grand and Summit counties.

But that doesn't mean the ponderosa is immune to attack.

"Lodgepole has been the most affected," said Rick Cables, regional forester with the U.S. Forest Service. Barring an (abnormally) cold winter, (the bark beetles) will kill all the lodgepole in the north. Then we expect them to work their way south.

"In this outbreak they appear to prefer the lodgepole, but if the beetles switch to ponderosa, it will be a devastating circumstance for the Front Range," Cables said.

Foresters are increasingly worried about the spruce beetle, which is killing Englemann spruce trees at high altitude, an infestation probably triggered by the drought years of 2002 and 2003. About 508,000 acres have been affected, including 70,000 new in 2009.

In the Evergreen area, Mike Goldblatt, owner of Lam Tree Service, said his company disposed of several thousand beetle-infected pine trees in 2009, of which about 150 were ponderosas. It was a "slight increase" over 2008, Goldblatt said.

"I think in the next three to 10

| ROCKY MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Total new acres affected per year | |
| Colorado and S. Wyoming | |
| | |
| 2009 | 524,000 |
| 2008 | 400,000 |
| 2007 | 500,000 |
| 2006 | 660,000 |
| Clear Creek County | |
| 2009 | 46,000 |
| 2008 | 18,000 |
| Jefferson County | |
| 2009 | 1,900 |
| 2008 | 338 acres |
| Summit County | |
| 2009 | 47,000 |
| 2008 | 65,000 |
| Grand County | |
| 2009 | 151,000 |
| 2008 | 208,000 |
| Source: U.S. Forest Service | |

years the situation may get pretty hectic, similar to the mountain counties. The progression is relatively slow. (Beetles) prefer lodgepole. They are starting to run out of lodgepole. Will they move into ponderosa full force?" Goldblatt said.

In the '70s the beetle came through and destroyed a lot of

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