

"The Citizen"

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BTW kids ready future memories

► Children prepare time capsule that will be opened in 25 years

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AUBURN — A group of children sat around a long, dining room table at Cayuga Museum Friday, their eyes glued to a television set.

On the screen, 12-year-old Katie Cox held up a picture of her favorite musical group, the Backstreet Boys. She planned to include this picture, along with a journal, photographs, and a self-portrait in the time capsule she and 11 other children from the Booker T. Washington Community Center worked on for six weeks.

Stephen Gage, the man behind the camera, joked that in 25 years, the musical group would be known as the Backstreet Old Guys. Gage taped the kids during the last time capsule session at the community center.

Jessica Kline, the museum's outreach coordinator, and Kelly Roe, the Schweinfurth Memorial Art Center educator, taught the sessions.

As a reward for all their hard work, the Museum held a luncheon where the children received a tour of the Intriguing Collections exhibit, ate pizza, watched themselves on tape, and received \$15 gift certificates to

the store of their choice.

"I learned a lot from this experience," Kline said. "I learned how out of touch I am. I didn't know any of the musical groups they were talking about or even the fashion trends."

The project involved discussions of facets of popular culture like music and television. The kids, ages ranging from 8- to 12 years old, predicted the state of culture 25 years from now.

They placed their predictions, pictures, artwork and the final videotape into a purple, plastic container that was about the size of half a bathtub. The capsule will be buried behind the community center sometime this spring.

In 25 years, it will be unearthed.

"I thought this was more successful than we originally envisioned," said Kevin Michael Days, executive director of the community center. "I think what's going to be really powerful is in 25 years, these folks who'll come back, will be able to watch themselves."

Days said he plans to be there if he's alive and well.

"We made a pact," Kline said.

Jeffrey Richardson, 10, said he hasn't made up his mind if he will come back to look through his things.

"If it's on a weekend, then I'll probably do it," Richardson said.

Youths put aside mementos for future

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sooner if the center was in danger of closing. I'd help keep it open," Bowman said.

Jeff Richardson, 10, said he found the time capsule informative and fun. He took photos of his family in their daily routines and made up his own song to record for placement in the time capsule.

What will he be doing in 25 years? A corrections officer, working in the Buffalo area, Richardson replied.

Living in Florida and making a living as a singer or musician is where Bradlee Cox, 11, thinks she'll be in 25 years. But she would love to take time from her career to come back for the time capsule unearthing.

"It was fun making our tape and video and taking pictures of my sister, my friends and my room to let people know what my life was like in 1999," she said.

At the first session, participants were given disposable cameras to photograph who and what is important to their lives. Drawings and stories of their family life accompanied the photos.

Also, the youths completed a questionnaire on their opinions and predictions for the future, and observations on challenges children of today face and what they may face in 25 years.

In the second session, the developed photos were analyzed and captions were written. Draw-

"I thought this would be a nice millennium project. It's important to look at our current environment before starting on a new century."

— Jessica Kline, Cayuga Museum educator

ings and a story about a family gathering were added.

A questionnaire on the children's music tastes and favorite songs and bands, plus a tape of today's music to be played in 25

years, were part of the third session.

Fashion was the focus of the third session, followed by television and sports.

The last session saw the young people finish their time capsules and make a presentation on video.

Those with perfect attendance will be given a gift certificate from their favorite store. The children also were treated to lunch at the Cayuga Museum, given a tour of the museum and shown the video that will go into the time capsule.

The box will be buried sometime in April.

"I'll be 55 in 25 years," Kline said. "But I would really like to come back, open the capsule and see these kids again."