



North / South America

"Jello is made out of rock", says student visting KBDJ quarry

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(Austin, Texas) -- **KBDJ**, a Hays County limestone quarry, on Nov. 24 became an outdoor classroom for about 120 fourth graders from Bridgepoint Elementary School in Eanes ISD.

"Jello is made out of rock!" said student Rebecca Quilkey after learning that limestone not only is used to build roads, but can be found in many other everyday items and food.

This is the second year the school has taken a field trip to the site. "The kids love it because it is so hands-on and they get to see the rock quarry," said teacher Susan Bigham. In class, the students have been learning about the Edwards Aquifer and its recharge zone, which includes the quarry land, she said. According to KBDJ President Jill Shackelford, "We love to educate the students on the importance of mining and the environment. We like to use this site as an outdoor classroom and let them get hands-on with what they have been learning in the classroom. This shows that mining and conservation can coexist."



"Rocks" - Liam Ziaja shows off the rocks he gathered at KBDJ quarry



"Seeds" - Amanda Elswick scatters wildflower seeds to create new habitat at the KBDJ quarry

Student field trips to the site helped KBDJ win certification earlier in November as a Corporate Lands for Learning program by the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) (www.wildlifehc.org). Since June 2007, KBDJ has hosted educators and schoolchildren and conducted environmental programs and projects at the quarry site.

Previously, WHC in 2008 recognized KBDJ and its parent company for creating a Wildlife at Work program. While at the site, the Bridgepoint Elementary students donned hard hats and gazed into the quarry pit; examined native habitat and planted wildflower seeds with the assistance of Hill Country Conservancy staff; learned about air quality and the Edward's Aquifer from representatives of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; and looked into a cave, one of the sensitive geographic features located on the site, with help from a Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District staff member.

The students also enjoyed a pizza lunch and were allowed to gather samples of the rock quarried on the site to take home, along with a goodie bag that included a T-shirt and rock identification kit "I think that it was pretty cool that I got to get my own rock," said student Amanda Elswick. "I hope we get to come back next year because it's a really cool place to come to."