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Weather



TODAY:
SHOWERS

HIGH OF 13
LOW OF 8



TUESDAY:
PERIODS OF RAIN

HIGH OF 13
LOW OF 6



WEDNESDAY:
SHOWERS

HIGH OF 16
LOW OF 4



THURSDAY:
MIX OF SUN AND CLOUD

HIGH OF 13
LOW OF 3



FRIDAY:
30 PERCENT CHANCE OF SHOWERS

HIGH OF 10
LOW OF 1

Mansonville Agricultural Youth Organization (Mayo) begins in Potton



THE SCOOP MABLE HASTINGS

The Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CABMN) youth programs have seen many changes this fall, as the non-profit charitable organization strives to adapt to the Covid pandemic while keeping some programs for youth up and running.

Hobby farm enthusiasts and Youth Centre animators Ethan Ball and Eleanor Cote have developed a program that allows for only eight children at a time, and is offered twice per week to two different groups of youth ages 5-11 years old (elementary school-aged).

The Mansonville Agricultural Youth Organization (MAYO in English) and Jeunes Agricultures' de Mansonville (JAM in French) began last week, with the youth visiting Ethan's hobby farm and meeting his Kunekune pigs. The program expectations were shared with the children with each child having a card with tasks to check off as completed providing the young "farmer" with points to apply to the creation of a model farm plot of their own back at the youth centre as the second part of the weekly activity; the points helping the child to purchase land, animals, feed...

When this reporter arrived at the scene of the gathering and asked how things were going, the first reply I received came from six year old Kendra Fortin who quickly explained to me the following: "We have three separate pastures so we are able to rotate the pigs, providing them with fresh growth to enjoy and giving the used pasture time to recover from being used."

My initial thought was, "Is this child really six years old?"

Jacob Vanier explained that the kids had to prepare fresh fruits and



PHOTOS COURTESY

vegetables for the pigs. He emphasized the animators purchase knives that kids can use so nobody gets cut. He also shared some of the other safety rules that had been established for all to follow.

In just a short time it was clear to me that the group of eight gathered, a variety of ages and backgrounds, had all found an interest in the animals and the work to be done to learn, apply oneself and share the experiences to come in tending animals and working the land.

This coming week, a second group will start meeting with both groups on different days visiting the horse farm of Eleanor Cote. Again, the youth will learn what it means to tend to horses and will be given tasks to accomplish to earn points toward the creation of their model farm.

"I think I am looking forward to it as much as the kids are," shared Cote. "I grew up on a farm and now

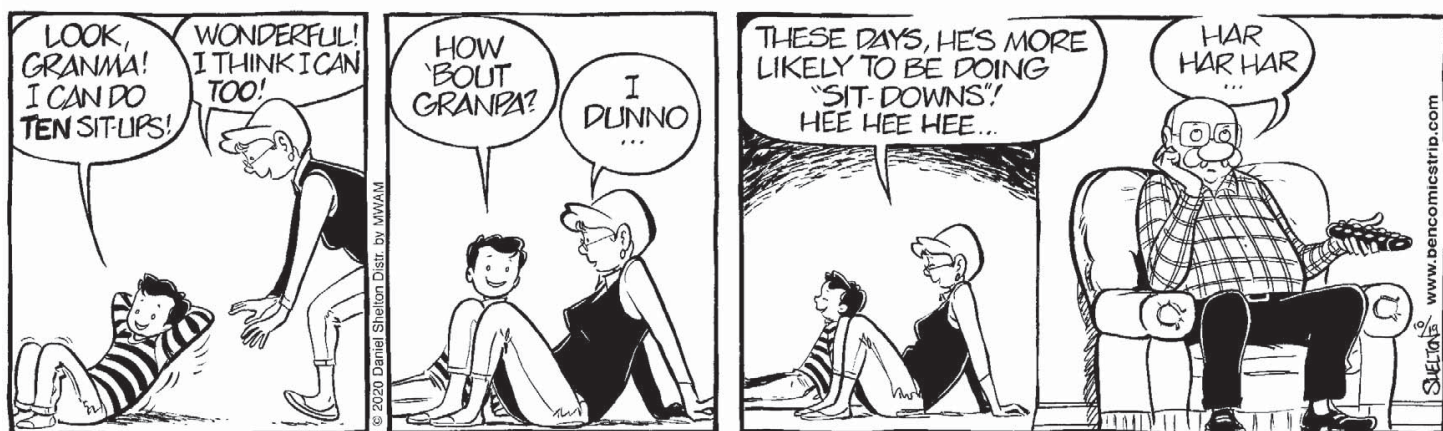
my grandchildren get to enjoy my continued love for horses, chickens... when they visit me. Like Ethan, I am happy to share my passion with the youth from the area," she added.

The hope is that the MAYO project can run throughout the winter giving the youth a year-round experience in hobby farming. The plan is to incorporate visits with local farmers to hear their farming stories and to visit larger local farms.

"We have been really lucky to be able to borrow a wonderful display on the history of farming in Potton through the Reilly House following a suggestion from Hilary Head who created the display," said Ball. "This display is beautifully done and gives a great portrait of the past. I am anxious to share it with the youth."

For more information on the MAYO/JAM project or the other CABMN Youth programs, visit www.cabmn.org

Ben by Daniel Shelton



LOOK, GRANMA! I CAN DO TEN SIT-LIPS!

WONDERFUL! I THINK I CAN TOO!

HOW 'BOUT GRANPA?

I DUNNO ...

THESE DAYS, HE'S MORE LIKELY TO BE DOING "SIT-DOWNS"! HEE HEE HEE...

HAR HAR HAR ...

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