

Forensics class nabs lizard thief

Patrice Cox's Forensic Science students have been studying and practicing on how to collect, lift and compare fingerprints. In a mock case of lizard-napping, Sully the science department lizard was "taken" by one of the staff members. Students investigated to find the culprit.

"I was very happy with the way my students handled the situation and how quickly they found the culprit," Cox said.

Some students were so nervous they had to start over on the fingerprinting card after messing up the first attempt.

"It was funny to see them being so careful to make sure that they were doing it correctly," librarian Melonie Menefee said. "Then Mrs. Cox came in and told them they had done it wrong and they had to start over."

Some of the "suspects" claimed, when questioned, that they weren't the culprit; the students fingerprinted all suspects anyway.

"I told them I didn't do it,"

assistant principal Janet Slaughter said. "It makes you feel a little uncomfortable, but they explained the process very well and I'm glad I could help them learn with this experience."

The culprit had a scar on her fingerprint, and this made it easy for the students to find the guilty party - receptionist Amanda Whittlesey.

"I wasn't aware that it would have come up on the fingerprinting card or on the glass," Whittlesey said. "The students did a good job; some of them I could tell were nervous, but they did a great job."

The purpose of this activity was to help the students identify the types of prints and patterns in fingerprints.

"I intended for them to look at all the patterns then make a decision," Cox said. "They took a look at the fingerprint taken from the glass cage and the fingerprint from Mrs. Whittlesey and they made the decision."

- by *Brittany Scott*



Can't get away from me. Senior Erykah Anderson works to dust for fingerprints to figure out who stole the lizard from teacher Patrice Cox's class. Cox set up multiple fake scenarios for her students during the school year. (scott photo)

