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NEIGHBORS

HOBART/MERRILLVILLE

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PHOTOS BY DAVE BARTMAN/POST-TRIBUNE

Hobart High School JROTC members freshman Morgan Kobitka, 14, (left); freshman Amjad Umrani, 15; senior Tom Edwards, 18; and freshman Samantha Christensen, 16, give fifth-graders at Joan Martin Elementary School a demonstration in folding the American flag.

Flag etiquette lesson

Hobart H.S. JROTC teaches flag facts to fifth-graders

By Bob Burns

Post-Tribune correspondent

HOBART — Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets from Hobart High School recently took on another role — teacher.

They led an exercise teaching American flag facts and etiquette at Joan Martin Elementary School.

Lt. Col. Scott Buhmann, commander and teacher for the JROTC classes, arranged for cadets to teach fifth-grade students at the school.

Groups of cadets in uniform visited fifth-grade classrooms and showed videos about the history of the American flag, how to treat it and how to fold it properly.

They also presented the lessons using games.

The cadets also answered questions.

"They are practicing leadership skills we have been teaching them in the JROTC classes," Buhmann said.

Two of the cadets, Tom Edwards and John Breese, are seniors. The others are freshmen.

Edwards and Breese helped the freshmen cadets organize their lessons in each class, then supervised as they led the lessons and organized the students into flag-folding teams.



Hobart High School JROTC member freshman Amjad Umrani, 15, watches as Joan Martin Elementary fifth-graders fold the American flag properly.

The Hobart JROTC program is in its third year, Buhmann said.

"We found that Hobart had a program about 25 years ago, but people were unaware of it for several years," he said.

"The goal is to teach cadets character, teamwork, commitment and desire," he said.

Samantha Christensen said she first learned about JROTC while in middle school and signed up when she entered high school.

"We are teaching the students all about the American flag, and they are paying good attention," she said.

"This is a good activity,"

cadet Cristina Rangel said.

"They're excellent," she said of students folding a flag.

"We learn to be proud of our flag and of America," said one of the students, Steven Somers.

Buhmann said similar classes were conducted at Liberty Elementary School and Hobart Middle School.