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**Boxing up their memories**

By Chuck Haga; Staff Writer

This, too, happened in an American public school Tuesday:

Laura Nelson put a video of her family into a metal box. She put in a letter from her father, a piece of bubble gum and a picture of the jet she threw up on during a trip to Costa Rica.

Natalie White offered a sealed letter from a favorite teacher, a list of famous people she likes and some poems she wrote. Rachel Sachs threw in the clown bear she made in first grade, a brochure from her summer camp and pictures of herself as a baby.

Into the squat metal box went a vial of Lake Minnetonka water, a copy of the day's newspaper - thankfully, not today's newspaper - and flattened cereal boxes.

"Why cereal boxes?" somebody asked.

"We might not have them in 15 years," Rachel said. "We might have an IV stuck in our arm for food."

The girls laughed. They looked at each other's baby pictures and laughed some more.

Time capsules are great, but a century is much too long to wait before opening one. So Girl Scout **Troop 82** from Minnetonka sealed a time capsule Tuesday and solemnly declared that it will stay closed for 15 years.

"It's a time span that will encompass these girls graduating from high school and college and getting into careers and adult relationships," said troop leader Chris Sullivan, 47. "It's also for me. I can reasonably commit to being here in 15 years."

The girls were unaware of what had happened in Littleton, Colo. For them, this was a day to preserve happy memories and artifacts of their youth.

Sullivan, a systems analyst at St. Jude Medical Center in St. Paul, asked the eight girls to think about who they are now and what they'd like to remember when they're older.

Jennie Kaczmarczyk put a rose in the box, a pink rose with a note from her mother. She put in "pictures of me when I was little," a video of herself at play and a unicorn necklace her father gave her when she was born.

Chris Sullivan's daughter, Rosie, contributed a picture of the two of them at a father-daughter dance. Lizzie Lubben put in a piece of her school artwork, a soccer-team button with her picture and a drawing of a horse. Stephanie Trow offered notes from friends, a rabbit's foot charm and "a tape of me talking."

Kirsten Paulson put in a recording of herself playing piano and clarinet, pictures of her dog and her house, and a letter from her grandmother.

Chris Sullivan put in the beat-up wooden ruler he used in fifth grade.

"You kept that?" one of the girls asked.

He also put in a grocery-store receipt, a copy of his pay stub (the girls, who said they expect to be lawyers, doctors, scientists, veterinarians and beauty shop owners by 2014, will be able to compare salaries) and an invitation to Rosie's birthday party.

The girls wrote their names on Girl Scout cookies, sealed them in a plastic bag and put that in the box, certain that the cookies will be fine in 15 years. They took one special cookie and passed it around so everybody could touch it.

Finally, they shut the time capsule and sealed it with string tied in hopeless knots.

It won't go in the ground or into a cornerstone, but Sullivan said it will be kept where nobody will disturb it until April 20, 2014.

"In my attic," he said.

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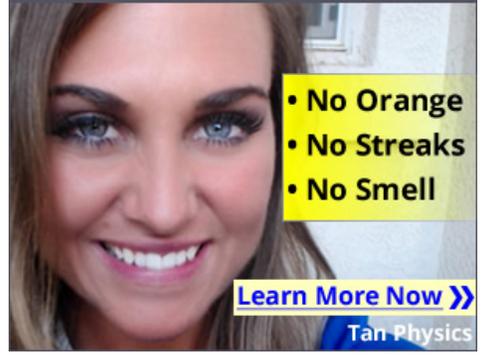
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