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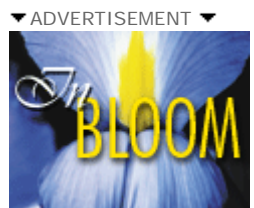
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Play shows kids how to be more eco-friendly

By NICOLE GERRING
Times Herald

The middle-aged man with wiry gray hair threw his (recyclable) soda can in the trash and refused to carpool with a co-worker.

"I own my own car for a reason, so I can drive to work in peace," said Eartheneezer Scrooge, a character in the *Earth Story: One Person Can Make a Difference*, a skit performed by Zippity2Dad Productions, two dads from Auburn Hills.

Students, parents, teachers and officials from Cleveland Elementary School in Port Huron learned about ways they can live greener lifestyles during a presentation Thursday night in honor of Earth Day, which was Sunday.

In an Earth Day take on Charles Dickens' classic, *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge was visited by three spirits: the ghosts of Earth Day past, present and future.

The ghosts showed Scrooge the beauty of the past natural environment, before human activities had a marked effect on plants, animals and the ecosystem. Another ghost showed him the importance of recycling today.

The ghost of Earth Day future presented a bleak picture of the Earth if Scrooge and other people don't reform their wasteful habits.

The skits' purpose was to teach children how to reduce their impact on the environment, said Shawn Ryskamp, one of the presenters.

Ryskamp and Tagg Smith sing songs, play guitar and perform skits for schools and groups around the state.

"We go over real simple things they can do in their house," Ryskamp said. "There are certainly things adults have to think about, such as driving ... but the kids can do things like eat off regular plates instead of paper."

ONLINE

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They also teach children to limit the amount of water they use by taking shorter showers and turn off lights that aren't needed.

"Those are basic things everyone can do, no matter how old you are," he said.

Bridget McQuiller said she wants her daughter, second-grader Jamiah, to adopt cleaner habits.

"I want her to learn how important it is to take care of the Earth and not throw your garbage on the ground and what can happen if you don't do that," she said.

McQuiller said she'll plant a garden with Jamiah this spring to help the 8-year-old connect to the Earth.

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