Have you got a story? Email our news team at news@leaderlive.co.uk

■ Joe McQuade on his digeridoo.

Strewth – now that's what I call a croc

By Garth ApThomas
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YALE College students were in for a fright when a tarantula, a scorpion and a bearded dragon all made an appearance at a science lesson.

But it was all part of a special interactive lesson at the college with conservationist Joe McQuade – also known as Crocodile Joe.

The students got their hands on live reptiles under his careful supervision.

The event was organised by the college's learning resource centre as part of the Yale Year of Reading initiative.

Students were given a presentation exploring the interdependence of the natural and manmade world.

Joe is passionate in his quest to develop awareness and understanding of the inter-relationships between animals and their surroundings and introduced a head cast of Spartacus – a 14ft saltwater crocodile who had died because he had eaten carelessly discarded plastic bags.

■ Patrick Whelan gets to grips with a lizard.

Joe gave college biology learners a very powerful environmental message as they enjoyed holding and getting to know his wonderful selection of rescue animals including a tarantula, scorpion, bearded dragon, corn snakes, a hermans tortoise, and a carpet python.

Finally Carol – a gigantic Burmese python – was uncoiled.

"Everyone was totally transfixed," said Janet Suckley from the learning resource centre. We really can access unusual learning resources at Yale."

The Crocodile Joe Experience aims to provide an educational hands-on interactive experience to encompass environmental issues, conservation, recycling and respect.

Joe has worked in Australia with Aborigines and zoologists, tracking crocodiles for research purposes, as well as rescuing and relocating dangerous animals such as snakes.

■ Molly Denly holds a tortoise.

Law court open day a chance to get behind the scenes

PEOPLE are being given an invitation to view the criminal courts from the inside – while keeping on the right side of the law

The law courts in Mold are hosting a family open day on Saturday, March 19, from 10am-3pm.

This will be an opportunity to take a tour of the courts, have your fingerprints taken, meet the judges and even be locked up in a cell.

Visitors will also be able to play 'You be the Judge', in which they hear real and recent, anonymous court cases and decide on the appropriate sentence using *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* style voting consoles.

Representatives from including the Crown Prosecution Service, North Wales Police and Witness and Victim Support will be on hand to answer questions and provide information about their organisations

Courts manager, Ffion Williams, said: "It will be, for many, a unique opportunity to look behind the scenes and to get a better perception of the court system than is sometimes portrayed on television."

Guest speaker at RAFA meet

THE next meeting of the National Service Royal Air Force Association's North Wales and Borders branch will be held on Monday, February 14.

Terry Patching will be guest speaker at the meeting which will be held at the Springfield Hotel, Pentre Halkyn, just off the A55 at 11.30am.

He will be talking about the Caernarfon Airport museum.

The monthly meetings provide an opportunity to meet fellow veterans and discuss experiences about their time in the services.

For more information contact 01978 761391.

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Awards night to honour youth workers

HARD-working youth workers are to receive the recognition they deserve at an awards ceremony.

The Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards offers the chance to reward and celebrate the work of individual projects, young people and youth workers.

Carl Sargeant AM for Alyn and Deeside said: "Through youth work young people in Alyn and Deeside make an invaluable contribution to our communities and the Youth Work in Wales Excellence Awards give recognition to the hard work and dedication of our youth workers."

The awards take place on March 17 and are a chance for colleagues, fellow professionals and young people to nominate and recognise people they feel are inspirational examples of excellence.

It is also an opportunity to say thank you on behalf of the young people whose lives they have enhanced.

For more information visit www.thanks sam.org.uk