NASA Opportunity – Gatton

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When it comes to opportunities presented at the Gatton Academy, even the sky is not always the limit.

A recent live Q and A with astronauts aboard the International Space Station is proof of that as Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

How do you celebrate holidays in space? What happens when you chew gum and blow a bubble in space? Those are just some of the questions asked of astronauts as they floated in the atmosphere some 250 miles away.

“Drew is showing you now how we fly around.”

“It was a lot of fun to watch because the astronauts were having fun too.”

It’s not every day students get to interact with astronauts while they are on board the International Space Station.

“The fact that they actually talked to an astronaut who was flying around the earth in a space station. It’s just a remarkable thing. 500 plus middle school students from classrooms in which there is a teacher who is a National STEM scholar gathered at the Kentucky Science Center for the downlink.

“In Louisville there was so much excitement in the room during the live interview with the astronauts.”

“Are there ever any practical jokes?”

The questions were submitted by National STEM Scholar classrooms nationwide, but were asked on camera by students representing six scholar classrooms in Kentucky.

“The technology is overwhelming.”

Space enthusiast and Gatton senior Sarah Vickers was one of seven Gatton students who were in the audience.

“The biggest thing I got out of it was learning how much they’re doing research for other scientists on the ground.”

She’s already conducting research in astro physics.

“It’s just fun to see something related to so many aspects of my life.”

Here on campus, the feed was made available at the Gatton Academy’s Great Hall.

“That’s what the idea is. Especially here at the Gatton Academy. To continue to provide this extreme level of educational opportunity.”

And lead to a passion some students may have never known existed.

“You never know what will spark interest that creates a career aspiration and provides a goal to work for.”

Dr. Julia Roberts is the director of the National STEM Scholar program which is funded by the National Stem Cell Foundation.

The Foundation was awarded the highly competitive NASA In-Flight Education downlink.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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