

GONE IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE



JENNIFER ACHE/REMAN/SPECIAL TO THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Princess Anne Elementary School first-grader Rachel Bolin peers into one of her class's homemade leprechaun traps.

Beach first-graders try to catch a tricky leprechaun

BY LAUREN ROTH
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VIRGINIA BEACH — Early this morning, a leprechaun visited Princess Anne Elementary School. He took off his shoes and sneaked around, leaving a trail of gold dust, green footprints, chocolates and jelly beans.

The first-graders aimed to catch him. Each set out a humane trap for the elusive little man Thursday afternoon. But the cranky Irish sprites and their stashes of gold have evaded people since ancient times. They can disappear in the blink of an eye.

The quick-witted students tried to lure him with SpongeBob chocolate coins, gold-painted popcorn and Lucky Charms

cereal. They taunted him with poetry, offers of free gold and signs.

But the students say they're not after his riches.

"I'd probably have him as a pet," said Taylor Richard, whose mom is allergic to furry creatures.

"I'll just let it free," said Tyler Brown. "But I'll make a wish first!"

The creature's path this St. Patrick's Day was hampered by false floors and trick doors. He faced a rigged plastic cup, a sticky tape snare and a yarn web hung low from the ceiling.

But he slipped away, just as he does every year.

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