



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

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HORSING AROUND

ARGYLE PROGRAM
BUILDS CONFIDENCE,
TEACHES RESPONSIBILITY

FULL STORY ON PAGE 2



REACHING FOR THE TOP

When it comes to enduring traditions at École secondaire Kelvin High School, Reach for the Top continues to thrive after 50-plus years.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 4

MORE DIVISION NEWS



WINNIPEG FOUNDATION GRANT POWERS MUSIC PROGRAM

PAGE 5



COLOURFUL WELCOME

PAGE 13



NAVIGATING THE NORTHERN FRONTIER

PAGE 19



HEALING WITH HORSES

STUDENTS BUILD CONFIDENCE, COMMUNICATION AND TRUST WITH FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS

A group of at-risk youth from Argyle Alternative High School is learning more about themselves and one of humankind's closest allies in the animal kingdom thanks to a new extracurricular program.

The Healing With Horses program has eight students travelling to Miracle Ranch weekly over a 10-week period. The program, based on the principles of equine therapy, helps students learn to better understand the feelings and behaviours of both their horses and themselves.

"We're using animal-assisted therapy techniques to improve physical, emotional and mental health," said Argyle Phys. Ed. Teacher Taylor Homenick. "Students explore and develop interpersonal skills and social skills around the world of larger animals."

UNDERSTANDING PERSONALITIES

Students work with the same horse week after week, allowing them to better understand the personalities and quirks of the animals.

"These animals have personalities, feelings, likes, dislikes and wants," said Gaeta Shaw, teacher and guidance counsellor. "How do we work together if we're both having bad days? How do we work together if you're not feeling well, but I am, or the other way around? It helps our students to be mindful of the fact that we communicate so much non-

verbally that affects relationships. That's a big part of it."

Students are learning that the emotions they bring to a riding session can impact their interactions with the horses.

"When I first started, there were some days when I was super stressed," said student Kody Snowbird. "I just told myself to relax. The instructor told us that the horse can feel what we're feeling. They pick up on that. After I'm done (a session) I just feel clear-headed and relaxed."

Ms. Homenick said the horseback riding sessions provide many opportunities for awareness and self-reflection. "It's a chance for students to really get in touch with how they're feeling."

Before each riding session, students groom their horses, as well as cleaning their hooves and ensuring the animals are properly saddled.

"In having to provide care for the animals, there's a responsibility, caring and kindness that we're hoping will translate into all of their relationships," Ms. Shaw said.

BUILDING TRUST

Students said it took time and care to build trust with their horses.

"If you're rough with the horse, the horse is going to be rough back to you," said student Rhianna Schell. "Whereas if you're gentle with it, the horse will be gentle and work with



you. You can apply that later on with how you connect with people."

Kody had a similar experience with his horse, Pandora. "When I first went up to her, she was kind of like me. I had to gain trust with her."

Student Allen Chartrand's horse, Goliath, lived up to his name in more ways than one.

"He's a big horse and he has a mind of his own," Allen said. "He'll have his own opinion when I want him to do something...and he's always wanting to eat, he has an appetite for sure. But he's a good horse."

Allen said he always feels the same after a horseback riding session. "I feel like I want another session right away."

Rhianna said all of the students

look forward to each riding session.

"You can have a really bad day, but when you go spend a couple hours with these horses, you forget about everything that was on your mind."

Ms. Homenick and Ms. Shaw—who have been learning alongside their students at Miracle Ranch—said they have seen tremendous growth amongst students and themselves.

"The students are attending every session. They're learning what they can do outside their comfort zone and they're so proud of themselves," Ms. Shaw said. "It's a positive place for joy."

"They're seeing that if they can make a 1,200 pound animal do something for them, what else can they do in life?" Ms. Homenick added.

HEALTHY IDEA

STUDENTS PRESENT MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT AT FACEBOOK HEADQUARTERS

A student-led mental health project at Sisler High School recently gained national attention after the young creators presented their work at Facebook's Canadian headquarters in Toronto.

Samantha-Maria Figueroa, Simarjeet Gill, Jennifer Pazdor and Stephanie Zabar's ongoing Save Our Minds project is designed to spread awareness of mental health issues among students through digital technology. The students have been working on a mobile-based application that would help students access mental health resources if they are experiencing problems, as well as augmented-reality-based awareness campaigns for organizations such as the Amanda Todd Legacy Society. Augmented reality technology allows cell phone users to scan posters, logos and photos to access online video and other resources.

In early November, the four students flew to Toronto and presented their project to 60 Facebook employees, while live-streaming to major centres such as Winnipeg, Ottawa and Montreal. The Sisler quartet, who have already pitched their project at local mental health conferences, said they didn't experience any nerves.

"Part of our goal when we started this was raising awareness about mental health, and by being able to go out and present at all of these different places, it's definitely putting that awareness out there," Simarjeet said.

The students will be working on

another augmented-reality "Elephant in the Room" campaign for the Mood Disorders Society of Canada.

"I think these organizations like the fact that this is students helping students," Jennifer said.

"Awareness is a big topic in schools nowadays, especially in high schools,"

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

Stephanie added. "Stopping the stigma associated with mental health is a big deal."

Earlier this year, the students were selected by the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health to receive a national Champion of Mental Health Award in the youth category.

Sisler Digital Voices students Samantha-Maria Figueroa (left), Simarjeet Gill, Stephanie Zabar and Jennifer Pazdor with a logo for the Amanda Todd Legacy Society. The girls have developed an augmented-reality campaign where students can scan the logo with their cell phones for more information.

NEVER TOO YOUNG TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

PHOTO AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

Just because you are only six years old, it doesn't mean you can't make a difference for your school.

That is exactly what former Champlain School student Roni Kaplun did when he was in kindergarten.

Principal Lisa Hasselfield said that when Roni was in kindergarten he decorated a tissue box for an art activity and his mom entered a picture of it into a national 'Design a Scotties' Tissue Box' contest which Roni won.

"As part of his prize, Champlain School received money. And that's how we got our new oodle swing," said Ms. Hasselfield. "The oodle

swing is extremely popular and is being enjoyed by all of the students at Champlain School."

Ms. Hasselfield was so inspired by Roni's story she dedicated a column in each school newsletter to recognize students, staff and members of the community who are making a difference and to share their stories.

"I am very happy and hope this will encourage other students to create and to value their work," said Roni's mom Kate Kaplun.

"It doesn't have to be a big event or action, we just want to celebrate people who make the lives of students, families or the community a little better and brighter by something they've done," said Ms. Hasselfield.

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Former student Roni Kaplun cut the ceremonial ribbon to officially open Champlain's new oodle swing. The swing was purchased after Roni won a national contest with his artwork.



A typically feisty lunch-hour practice with members for the Kelvin Reach for the Top team.

REACHING FOR THE TOP

When it comes to enduring traditions at École secondaire Kelvin High School, Reach for the Top continues to thrive after 50-plus years. Every noon hour, student players file into teacher Raymond Sokalski's room to practise the quick question-answer game while eating their lunch. Mr. Sokalski has been coaching the team for 18 years; teacher John Martens has coached alongside Mr. Sokalski for the last 16 years. "Kelvin has had a Reach for the Top team continuously since the early Sixties, so we just took over from teachers who were retiring," Mr. Sokalski said, adding that the game always seems to attract a certain type of student. "There are a lot of students who have a ton of factoids that don't seem to belong anywhere in their brains...until someone asks

a question." When you marry that knowledge with speed, points and strategy, you end up with a competitive sport that challenges the mind. "I just know a lot of random stuff on a wide variety of subjects...I read and I learn," said student Torbjörn Thomson. "It's fun and you're doing something for the school. It's a way to have Clipper pride." Players are recruited through a variety of ways. Mr. Martens is known to finish off a band class with a few trivia questions, while making note of students who take an interest. "I don't do it on purpose, it's just my nature," Mr. Martens laughs. "I'll just throw out trivia questions." Last school year, Kelvin had two teams that enjoyed success in Reach for the Top. The school's senior team,

comprised of Ian Shapira, George Penner, Sam Anthony, Nigel Silversides and John Manning (and supported by Graeme Olson, Toryn MacIntosh and Alex Tivoli), captured the provincial championship. In May, the team was invited to take part in the national tournament in Toronto, along with 14 other top Canadian schools; the team ultimately earned a respectable fifth place finish nationally. At the intermediate level provincials in Portage la Prairie, Kelvin's team of Torbjörn Thomson, Theoren Terra, Eric Keilback and Mohamed Aden captured the provincial championship. What makes a great Reach for the Top player? "You have to be naturally curious," said senior team member Sam Anthony. Eric Keilback said anticipation also plays a role: "When you watch

Jeopardy, they read out the entire answer before people buzz in with a question. In Reach for the Top, you can buzz in midway through the question and anticipate the answer. That's the trick at that top level of play." Teamwork is also important. Players instinctively know each other's areas of strength. "We specialize in different areas," said Theoren Terra. "I specialize in a lot of the sciences, like chemistry and biology, and linguistics." That diversity of knowledge is not only important to success in the game—it's also the main reason lunch hours are so lively in Mr. Sokalski's classroom. "You have people from a lot of different academic and social backgrounds...there's a sense of camaraderie," Eric said.



WINTER WONDER

Students and staff from Dufferin School helped Health Sciences Centre and Children's Hospital Foundation of Manitoba with the official opening of the hospital's Winter Wonderland light display. Dr. Goodbear and students played a mini-concert of seasonal carols at HSC's Sherbrook entrance, while winter added its own set decoration for the Nov. 18 event.

WINNIPEG FOUNDATION GRANT POWERS MUSIC PROGRAM

Children of the Earth High School students and staff are thanking the Winnipeg Foundation for an \$8,000 grant donated toward the school's afterschool music program. "The Winnipeg Foundation has donated a very generous grant to Children of the Earth that will allow us to run the afterschool music program all year," said Principal Jackie Connell. "This is a perfect opportunity for students to be involved in learning how to read music...and it's a really nice outlet for students to self-express in a positive way." Now in its second year, the program is open to all students in Grades 9-12 who are interested in artistic collaboration, playing instruments, singing and song writing. Along with two professional instructors, the program also incorporates peer led instruction.

Student Arielle Stoodley said she was learning to play guitar and already enjoyed singing. "I love everything about music, it's fun and it helps express how I feel in ways I normally can't," Arielle said. "Just being able to get all that emotion out through song is really a good thing for me. It helps me through life." Instructor and artist Lindsey White said the program not only supports musical skill development but also encourages creative expression and leadership. "These students have proven themselves to be artists, again and again in both solo and full band capacities," Ms. White said. "By being brave enough to try new things, they have seen tremendous growth in their own abilities, ideas and learning capacities. Many have continued to pursue music



after graduation and all have taken these artistic experiences with them as something valuable and worthwhile that cannot ever be removed from their lives." Ms. White performed as part of an official grant celebration, which was held on Oct. 29 at the school.

OUT OF THIS WORLD

PHOTOS AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

Montrose School was fortunate enough to have an opportunity to find out what it's like to see Canada through the eyes of astronaut Chris Hadfield. The school brought in a giant map of Canada, measuring 11-by-8 meters and covering over half the floor space in the school's gym. The map came from the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and uses images taken by Canada's Earth Observation Satellite RADARSAT-2. Catherine Ko Heinrichs, AM Nursery Teacher at Montrose School said it was a wonderful learning resource for all ages. "It is a hands-on, multi-sensory way of learning about maps and improving our geographic literacy," said Ms. Ko Heinrichs. Children studied Canada's provinces and territories, traced the route Terry Fox ran, reviewed atmospheric and ocean temperatures, and discussed where various animals of Canada can be found.



Catherine Ko Heinrichs, AM Nursery Teacher, leads her class through various activities on the giant Canadian map that was photographed from space.

A GROWING SUCCESS STORY

While Hugh John Macdonald School was selected as a winner of a 2014 Manitoba Garden Makeover Award, the school's greenspace project has been a success story since 2010.

The Hugh John Macdonald Students' Garden offers students and the community a chance to learn and enjoy nature. Community members can sit and relax in the garden and even pick some vegetables if they wish. Approximately 10-15 students are hired to look after the garden over the summer, providing an early employment opportunity.

"We look for students who are really interested in what we are doing and have that willingness to learn," said teacher Karyl Elliot. "Each of the students has their own section to look after. They learn so many skills through this."

Student Leul Bekele said much of the work involves watering, weeding and picking up litter that might accumulate. "It's fun getting to know everyone too," he added.

"We mostly just took care of the plants and made sure they were growing well," said student Mohamed Ahmed Abduikadir, who came to Canada from Kenya two years ago.

He said the toughest part of the job was the mosquitoes. "But we had that in Kenya too."

Mohamed said the garden was a great opportunity for students.

"People are getting a chance to learn how to grow...one day, when they're older, they can grow a garden in their own backyard."

The garden takes shape in the classroom during the cold months of the year. Students learn to budget and purchase plants to be used in the spring.

"Everything starts in the classroom," said Raymond Ngarbou, who is the Community Economic Development Association (CEDA) worker at Hugh John Macdonald. "Most of the students here are involved in the garden during the school year. We're developing leadership qualities with these students. We encourage them to bring their families and involve them as well."

Students are given a blue box full of seedlings and soil to take home, and excess soil is offered for community use.

A spin-off of the greenspace project is From Garden to the Table, a nutrition program. Produce from

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Community Economic Development Association (CEDA) worker Raymond Ngarbou, Leul Bekele, teacher Karyl Elliot and Mohamed Ahmed Abduikadir in the Hugh John Macdonald community garden. Ms. Elliot and Mr. Ngarbou said the garden wouldn't be possible without the support of Principal Vinh Huynh and the hard work of teacher Don Adamson.

the garden is taken directly to the school's newly renovated kitchen space, where students can learn how to cook through partnerships with other community agencies.

"We try to get everyone involved in the garden as much as possible," Ms. Elliot said.

WHERE PANTHERS DARE

Gordon Bell High School has embarked on phase two of developing its greenspace for active living. This fall, the school began an ambitious fundraising drive to raise \$250,000 to light up the outdoor recreation space.

"We have here a beautifully developed area for the use of students and community members," said Principal Arlene Skull. "We want to see it lit up to help lengthen the time in the day when we can safely be active in the space."

Gordon Bell High dedicated its much-loved greenspace to donors on Oct. 23, naming the facility the Gordon Bell Panther Field after the school's athletics teams.

During the ceremony, Principal Skull thanked donors for their generosity, and encouraged all Winnipeggers to help sustain active life styles in the greenspace by donating to the lighting fundraiser.

Following the ceremonies, students enjoyed a celebratory game of flag football on the artificial turf, which was already dry despite a downpour the previous day.

"It would be great for kids to be

able to see out there and play football after supper before it gets too cold," said former student and athlete Jordan Knott.

Student Anak Akeen said she would like to use the park to snow shoe with friends after school in the winter, but it's too dark. "Lights will make a big difference in how much we can use the space all year round. I hope people donate and help make this dream come true too," she said.

Akeen is referring to the "Green Dream" that brought the community together, raising a total of \$1.5 million and matching a Manitoba Education grant. The funds went toward developing a car dealership lot into the greenspace used daily by Gordon Bell students.

Donations can be made to the Winnipeg School Division registered charity, Children's Heritage Fund, for the Gordon Bell Greenspace. Tax receipts are issued for donations of \$10 and higher.

For more info visit www.winnipegd.ca/CHF

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Gordon Bell students Anak Akeen (left), Erika Aquino and Chad Kakegamic stand by the new sign gracing the Gordon Bell Panther Field.

JUMP START FOR TEC VOC LAB

Tec Voc High School is celebrating a \$14,200 Future Shop Generation Tech Lab grant that will be used to create a wireless business technology lab.

Future Shop representatives visited the school on Sept. 17 to present the grant.

"Technology keeps students motivated and allows them to stay competitive as they move towards either post-secondary education or into the world of work," said business teacher Kathleen Mira.

"Our business and computer technology students will now have access to cutting-edge technology in a wireless environment."

Greg Link, the school's Department Head of Applied Technology &

Commerce, said the grant will be used to convert a 65-year-old classroom into a modern marketing, accounting and entrepreneurial innovation centre with laptops and an all-inclusive printer and projector.

The school was awarded the grant based on a successful student proposal that included a two-minute video about the Tec Voc program. The school was one of just nine selected from over 135 applicants.

Tec Voc Principal Gord Crook said the grant tapped into Tec Voc's long history of cutting edge technology, industry partnerships and career training.

"We're very appreciative of this opportunity," Mr. Crook said.



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ROLE MODELS

Ralph Brown School students Zystinya Hotomani-Milardovic (left), Nika Gnydyuk and Hannah Barnbrook meet with Winnipeg's Chief of Police Devon Clunis during a recent youth wellness event.

The Winnipeg School Division (WSD) and the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) worked collaboratively to present the third annual Youth Wellness Conference at R.B. Russell Vocational High School on Nov. 7.

The conference, made up of

select Grade 7 and 8 students from across WSD, featured presentations on cyber bullying, street safety, nutrition & health, and youth wellness.

MLA Kevin Chief and Chief Clunis, both WSD graduates, were on hand to share their life stories and discuss the value of setting life goals.

WSD and WPS are ongoing partners through the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. The program introduces police officers into the schools to focus on safety and education.

HELLO, SPACEMAN

Students from Argyle Alternative High School had the opportunity to chat with astronaut David Saint-Jacques during the school's recent career day.

The Quebec-born astronaut spoke with students from a training location in Texas via Skype.

"Spaceflight has given us a lot of technology, of course...but it's mostly given us wisdom as humans," Mr. Saint-Jacques said. "One amazing gift of spaceflight to mankind are these images of the Earth, seen from space...thanks to spaceflight, we know our planet is small and fragile, floating in this deadly vacuum. We'd better be smart and take care of it."

He also spoke about his pursuit of his current career, which has included lengthy periods of education and training.

Work Education Coordinator Mike Plaetinck, one of the key

organizers of the career day, said the event had presenters that ranged from animal health technologists to CSIS (the Canadian Security Intelligence Service).

"We try to make this in a format that's engaging for the students," he said. "We try to give students more information about careers they want to know about, but we also try to expose them to careers they may not have thought about before."

Student Jadene Chaboyer, who hopes to one day become a youth care worker, felt the career day was a valuable experience for students.

"It gives students options for when they're done school," she said.

Mr. Plaetinck credited the Argyle staff, including Career Intern Krystina Fleming, and the presenters for making the day possible.

"We all come together to make this day happen."



CYBER ENHANCEMENTS

The provincial government has announced funding for a state-of-the-art data centre for Sisler High School's network and cyber security programs.

"The Winnipeg School Division is pleased that the province is providing additional supports and resources to ensure students have opportunities to build their technical-vocational and academic skills to prepare for their future employment in areas of information technology," said WSD Board Chair Mark Wasyliw. "This initiative will allow students to have opportunities in the classroom and hands-on experience to network and cyber security learning opportunities."

Teacher Charles Bazilewich said the data centre would aid in the delivery of an eight-course program in network and cyber security through Manitoba Education & Advanced Learning starting in September 2015.

The data centre will serve as home for learning activities, virtual images and lab activities that students can connect to remotely or in the classroom. The centre will also provide a safe analytical environment for students to study network and cyber security issues.

"With the data centre, not only can we help WSD students, but



eventually we can expand as a provincial model," Mr. Bazilewich said. "It removes the barriers of a classroom...students can log in from anywhere in the province."

Sisler networking and cyber security students have proven their talents in national competitions such as Skills Canada and the international CyberPatriot Games. Twelve students from the Sisler

program have already either been hired or have had paid internships with local companies.

Former Sisler student Nick Dixon, who now works with cyber security firm Securix in Winnipeg, said former students will be continuing their involvement with the program.

"We're all looking forward to being part of (this centre's) future. All of this additional funding will really

help us mentor current and future students of the academy in ways we'd never thought of."

Premier Greg Selinger, Education and Advanced Learning Minister Peter Bjornson, Trustees Mike Babinsky, Chris Broughton and Kevin Freedman, and a host of industry representatives were on hand for the \$300,000 funding announcement at Sisler on Nov. 13.

MORE FUN AT STANLEY KNOWLES

PHOTOS AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

On Oct. 3, École Stanley Knowles School officially opened its brand new play structure. The project came to a reality after two years of school fundraising, including help from Winnipeg School Division's Children's Heritage fund and city and provincial grants, which totaled \$142,000.

The new play structure is optimized for safety and accessibility. The playground is geared toward five to 12 year olds and is durable enough for adults to climb on with their children. Some of the favorite areas are the rock climbing and the multiple person oodle swing.



École Stanley Knowles students test out their new state-of-the-art playground.

EVERYTHING ZEN

YOGA PROVIDES CALM FOR BODY AND MIND

The lights in the Montrose School gymnasium are dimmed and students are lying flat on their yoga mats with their eyes closed. Teacher Murray Mandzuk is walking inside the circle of students, speaking in a calm, positive voice, telling students to envision a place where they feel happy and relaxed.

"Can you get to that peaceful place even when things are difficult, challenging or frustrating?" he says. "Outside at recess, something could be really bothering you and you feel like you want to cry or tell somebody off because you are really upset. In that moment, can you remember to breathe? As soon as you can do that, everything will be reduced."

Mr. Mandzuk is teaching Montrose's Grade 1-6 classes yoga one day each cycle. Along with stretching and exercise, students are learning mindfulness and meditation skills.

The teacher says the intent is for students to be able to take the techniques they learn in yoga and apply them to challenges they may face in everyday life.

"Breathing is the focus...the goal is to match their brain and their body



so that they are both peaceful," Mr. Mandzuk says. "Breathing is the glue that makes that connection."

Along with its calming effects on the mind, yoga also provides a great physical activity for students.

"This is really part of the phys. ed. and health program. We're providing those physical components as well, like the stretching and strengthening," Mr. Mandzuk says.

The teacher has personally been doing yoga for over ten years.

"Mentally, physically and emotionally, yoga has helped me in every aspect of my life. It's transformed me as a human being and a teacher, and my goal is to do the same thing with these kids."

This is the second year yoga has been school-wide at Montrose; in previous years, Mr. Mandzuk saw positive results when teaching yoga to students in his class.

Grade 6 students Caiden Chan and Logan Broughton have been doing yoga for four years.

"Yoga relaxes you and clears your head," Caiden says.

"Sometimes, if you are stressed before you go to yoga, you come out really relaxed and ready to start your day," Logan says. "And if you're stuck on a hard math question, the breathing technique helps to calm you down. The gears start to move in your head in a better way."

He adds that yoga has helped make him more flexible and agile for football.

A GIFT OF TIME

A piece of history has come home to Daniel McIntyre Collegiate Institute.

A pocket watch that belonged to Dr. Daniel McIntyre has been donated to the school by his great-grandson.

David Rich, from Denver, Colorado, had been the latest to receive the watch, which had been handed down for several generations. The 1912 gold watch had been given to McIntyre upon his retirement as Winnipeg's first Superintendent of Schools.

McIntyre's family contacted the school earlier this year before flying to Winnipeg in October to hand-deliver the storied watch. Eleven McIntyre family members attended, coming from as far away as Sweden, California, Toronto and Vancouver for a special ceremony and tour of the school on Oct. 16.

"Our kids treated them like celebrities and stopped them in the hall for pictures—all they knew was that these visitors were related to the person our school is named after,"

said interim Vice-Principal Lorraine Illagan. "Our whole school came together for this event. Our home economics students prepared the food, our choir students performed and our leadership students were part of the event as well."

DMCI alumni Elsie Hignell, who is also member of the DMCI Athletic, Arts, Cultural and Education Fund, said Dr. McIntyre was a visionary who worked to enrich the education of students in the public school system.

"With his foresight, he could see the one glaring omission between the private and public schools in Winnipeg—the Arts. He felt kids in the public school system should have that advantage too. So he introduced the Arts into the public school system and look where we are today...it's marvelous. The foresight of the man in that time to do that was amazing."

The watch ceremony took place in the school library, under a massive portrait of Dr. McIntyre.



"The family said they were overwhelmed," Ms. Hignell said.

Ms. Illagan added that alumni and students were equally moved. "Our alumni and students are very proud of that history."

David Rich (left) officially presents the pocket watch that belonged to his great-grandfather Dr. Daniel McIntyre to DMCI Alumni Board President Doug Sargeant.

THINKING GREEN

TRANSFORMING RED WORMS IN A BASEMENT TO A LIVING CLASSROOM

PHOTO AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

Three years ago, self-proclaimed tree hugger and Grade 1 French Immersion teacher Jo Fredericks started teaching the primary students at École George V School about what was recyclable and compostable in their lunches.

Instead of just throwing their leftovers and packaging in the garbage, they were encouraged to sort and categorize their trash into landfill, recyclable, reusable and compostable.

All of the compostable materials collected were placed in an ice cream pail in each classroom and at the end of the week they were dumped into a larger bucket. Ms. Fredericks would take the collected compost material to put in her worm box at home.

In 2013, George V received an ESD grant to build a fenced in greenspace on the south end of the school field.

Now in its third year, the George V ESD team has grown to 20-plus members from Grades 3 thru 8. The future goal of the program is to have all grades share duties in the collection and delivery to the composts.

"Mme Jo and I introduced the idea to the primary children but the ESD students have really taken ownership of the composting and are taking it upon themselves to educate the lunch program on how to sort their trash," said Grade 2 French Immersion teacher Chantelle Manicom.

The fenced greenspace allows students to interact in a living classroom environment and learn



Students from the École George V School ESD class hold up signs letting classmates know what materials they can and can't compost during opening ceremonies for the school's compost garden.

how different plants and animals prepare for the winter.

The school credited two community members for building two new picnic tables for everyone to enjoy. There are also plans to build planter boxes for each classroom so they can use their composted soil to grow beautiful flowers.

To help educate both students and parents, the school will run a monthly column in its newsletter giving tips about creating a greener future.



Principal Manuel Silva cuts the ceremonial ribbon to officially open the compost garden at École George V School.

A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

PHOTO AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

Clifton School held its Remembrance Day assembly on the morning of November 10.

The intermediate choir performed the song *One Voice* followed by Grade 5 students singing *Great Law of Peace* and the primary choir

concluded the musical tributes with their performance of *Where Have All The Flowers Gone*.

Clifton School was honoured to be joined by Patrol Sergeant Richard McDougall who performed the *Piper's Lament* on his bagpipes.



INSPIRATIONAL STORY

PHOTO AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

A room full of students at Children Of The Earth sat quietly hanging on every word as a former refugee from Somalia, Muuxi Adam, 26, shared his real life stories of tragedy and how he overcame adversity.

At age 14, Adam was kidnapped and chained to a fence for 18 months. After breaking free he found his way to his home, but his family had left. He set off on a flight with a friend, expecting to reunite with his family in Ethiopia, but instead the flight was heading to Canada. After a bus ride from Toronto, Adam ended up at the bus depot in Winnipeg.

Cold, confused and not knowing any English, Muuxi stood outside the depot on a cold October morning for hours before Abdi Ahmed passed by and asked if he needed help.

In 2004, Adam and Ahmed established the not-for-profit Human Kind International (HKI), dedicated to building schools for refugee children in Ethiopia and Kenya.

The Human Kind Academy opened its doors in January, 2014 and currently has 71 children between

the ages of five and eight. The Dadaab Refugee Camp and surrounding area are benefitting from this project.

The goal is to raise enough money to increase the student population to 151 by January, 2015. HKI is reaching out to students across the division to join in and help fundraise to make it a reality.

Adam won the 2014 Young Humanitarian of the Year Award at the Red Cross Power of Humanity Awards.

Strini Reddy also spoke to the students about the Zimbabwe Water Project. Reddy is the International Services Director of the Rotary Club of Downtown Winnipeg and together with his good friend Dr. Zephania Matanga, the Executive Director of the Canadian Multicultural Disability Institute, they are trying to raise money to build two water wells in the Chirasauta community.

Currently, the closest medical clinic is 27 kilometres away and transportation is not reliable.

Phase One saw the drilling of a well, installing a diesel pump, and providing a very large tank which will provide the villagers with access to their daily water needs.

This is a great accomplishment because Chirasauta is situated in a mountainous part of the country where it rains for only three months of the year. Over periods of the dry season there is literally no source of clean water. This also means that the residents of the village can not grow crops to feed themselves.

The project is now focused on fundraising for Phase Two, which will consist of installing a large tank

at the school and one at the clinic, as well as an irrigation system which will enable the villagers to grow food year round.

If you or your school would like to get involved with either project please visit www.humankindinternationalinc.org for the HKI project or contact Strini Reddy at sereddy@shaw.ca for the Zimbabwe Water Project.



Muuxi Adam a refugee from Somalia shares his story with students from Children Of The Earth.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY

École George V School is celebrating its 100th Anniversary on June 5 and 6, 2015. Alumni and past staff are welcome to join the festivities and can register online by visiting the school website at www.winnipegssd.ca/schools/georgev or by calling the school at 204-669-4482.

For more information on the June 5 tea and the June 6 carnival, please visit our website.



EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS, DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JEFF MILLER

Students, staff and special guests gathered at St. John's High School on Sept. 15 to officially open the Winnipeg School Division's *Everybody has the Right* week with song, dance and inspiring speeches from youth leaders at the school.

In anticipation of the opening of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights on Sept. 20, WSD schools celebrated with a week exploring human rights, diversity and equity.

"Celebrating human rights is about our diversity and everything we do to treat each other equally and respectfully all year long, every

year," said St. John's Principal Doug Taylor, adding that the school was honoured to launch the celebration. One of the student speakers was Riley Nepinak, who is also a youth representative of WASAC (Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre), a program that focuses on leadership and mentorship skills for Aboriginal youth through sport and recreational programs.

"WSD is embracing our diversity and supporting it by helping us learn more about our cultures and each other's cultures. Whether it's how they live, their beliefs or

languages, they provide those kinds of opportunities," Riley said.

Matthew Hebert, a Grade 10 student, participated in the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies program, which visited Washington, D.C. last spring. He shared his experiences of the trip, discussing how it opened his eyes even more about the importance of human rights for all.

The launch also featured a performance by St. John's Senior Dancers under the choreography of student teacher Madison Sutherland; the students showcased a lyrical dance

Everybody has the right...



Exploring Human Rights and how to make the world a better place

September 15 to 19, 2014



to Sierra Noble's song "Possibility." Later, singer-songwriter Rachel Ashley sang her anti-bullying song "I Know."

The celebration concluded with the official premiere of the Winnipeg School Division's new human rights video *Everybody has the Right*.

Watch the video and find out more about the entire week at www.winnipegsd.ca/everybodyhastheright



GRATEFUL FOR OUR RIGHTS

Students at Tec Voc High School took a look at what life might be like without basic human rights as part of their *Everybody has the Right* celebrations.

All students at the school were asked to answer the question "If your Human Rights were taken away, what would you miss most?"

Students' responses ranged from food and freedom of religion to the right to privacy and the right to dance. The answers were posted in Tec Voc's main hallway.



COLOURFUL WELCOME

Lord Selkirk students and families are getting a colourful welcome when they enter the front doors of the school.

Students, along with artist Annie Bergen, created a two-wall mural to coincide with the school's *Everybody has the Right* celebrations.

"We are always wanting to build a sense of community within our school. We want to create a great environment that is respectful, safe and embodies all the wonderful qualities of the new human rights museum," said Principal Stormie Duchnycz. "We thought this would be a great way to welcome our families when they come in the front door."

The mural captures Lord Selkirk as a welcome place for all students and their families. Atop the mural, students have written words they feel describe their school, such as "friends", "diversity", "learning" and "sharing".

"It's turned out really nice," said Grade 6 student Sarah Horishney, adding that the mural depicts several different rooms in the school. "In the first room we have

our community room, which is a room where people can read or play with their kids. The second room is a Grade 5 classroom, with a computer and a bookshelf, and the last room is the music room, and we have kids playing the steel drums in it."

"The hardest part was having to paint so big," added student Kendra Lee.

Every Lord Selkirk student was able to have a hand in creating the mural, from drawing and painting the artwork to providing personal mementos that were glued into the piece.

"We wanted all of the kids to feel that this is their mural, and their school," Ms. Duchnycz said.

Ms. Bergen said the experience of creating the mural was an important process for students.

"I think it brings a lot of pride to the school because the kids all contributed their ideas," she said. "They learn a lot along the way, like art skills and how to collaborate with each other...they see what can happen when everyone combines their efforts."

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

Students Sarah Horishney (foreground), Kendra Lee and artist Annie Bergen work on Lord Selkirk's new entryway mural.

TREE OF DIVERSITY

When it comes to human rights, students have a lot to say; at Andrew Mynarski VC School, students wrote down their thoughts to create the multi-coloured “leaves” of their school’s Diversity Tree.

The tree was erected as part of the school’s participation in Everybody has the Right, a WSD rights celebration designed to preface the opening of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

Students in the Asper Foundation’s Holocaust and Human Rights Studies Program helped to organize activities for the week and encouraged students to share their ideas. Students also discussed human rights over the morning announcements and during school-wide assemblies.

“This helped to unify our school,” said one student in the program.

Each day, students hung leaves that expressed their thoughts on a different human rights theme: Sept. 16 highlighted diversity, equity and inclusion (white leaves); Sept. 17 explored anti-bullying and anti-homophobia (pink leaves); Sept. 18 had students discussing social justice (black leaves) and Sept. 19 focused on Aboriginal education (red leaves).

Regarding equity at Andrew Mynarski VC, one student wrote: “I feel equal by not judging people and



Students from the Asper Foundation’s Holocaust and Human Rights Studies Program pose with the Andrew Mynarski VC Diversity Tree.

treating other people the way I want to be treated.”

Students were also asked how they felt included at their school. “I feel included when people talk to me,” one student wrote, while another stated, “I feel included when I hang out with my fellow school mates in teams like

basketball, track, etc.”

Teacher Stefania Zaurrini, who served as a teacher liaison on the project with fellow educators Melissa Valenzuela and Meghan Davidson, said Asper Program students had rallied together to make the week a success.

“They’re unified, they work together as a team and they enjoy each other’s company,” she said.

“They’re spreading the word and getting kids to be aware of different things happening in our school, our city, our country and especially around the world.”

PAINTED RIGHT

With The Canadian Museum for Human Rights located close by, Argyle Alternative High School students and staff are looking forward to seeing the museum up close.

Argyle held two full weeks of activities during the WSD Everybody has the Right celebration to honour the museum’s opening; this included a simulation activity involving the acquisition and distribution of resources, guest speakers and a culminating whole-school art project.

The mosaic mural project had students and staff creating artwork responding to the five themes: diversity and equity, inclusion, anti-homophobia and anti-bullying, social justice and Aboriginal education.

“Even though we’re from all different parts of the city, different ages and cultures, there is a community that we build here,” said teacher Michelle Bradley Hakimelahi. “We all come together and make it work. So that’s why we liked the idea of making a mosaic.”

Student Jadene Chaboyer chose an Aboriginal theme for her canvas: “It’s about taking action for Aboriginal

rights. I used colours from the Medicine Wheel...they’re very important to my culture.”

Student Macey MacDonald created two pieces: one on the right to education, the other on the right to marriage and family.

“Education is difficult to come by in many parts of the world,” she said. “These are both rights that are personally important to me, and this is a way to show how dedicated I am towards human rights.”

The human rights artwork is currently being displayed in the Argyle multipurpose room alongside “found object” mosaic pieces—made on cupboard doors and windows—which students created last year with local artist Ursula Neufeld. The found art project, sponsored by the Manitoba Arts Council and the Manitoba Association of Art Educators, will be displayed as a mural outside the school sometime this school year.

“After putting these pieces up, you really get a sense of the diversity that’s reflected in our student population,” said teacher Michele Rybuck.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

Argyle students Jadene Chaboyer (left) and Macey MacDonald with their human rights artwork.



CREATING OUT OF THIN AIR



Photo courtesy of Ellen Donogh. Artist and author Cybele Young reads to Luxton students.

Every year, as Winnipeg gets ready for its annual Thin Air International Writers’ Festival, students at Luxton School are excited to join in the celebration.

Teacher-librarian Ellen Donogh always makes sure to include students in the spirit of the event by inviting authors to read at the school. This year Luxton hosted writers Caroline Adderson and Cybele Young.

Ms. Adderson has written both children’s and adult works; her youth-oriented books include *I, Bruno* and *Middle of Nowhere*. The latter book, which is a 2014 MYRCA nominee, features Vancouver as a setting. During

her presentation, the author shared the real Vancouver locations that provided the framework for descriptions in her book.

While discussing her picture book *Norman, Speak*—about a dog who only understands Chinese commands—Ms. Adderson asked students to share how they say hello in their many different cultures.

Ms. Young is an artist and author whose books include *Nancy Knows*, *A Few Bites* and its sequel, *A Few Blocks*. The artist enthralled students with the miniature paper sculptures featured in *Nancy Knows*. Students were able to gently investigate some of the sculptures, such as a tiny paper shopping bag complete

with paper apple.

Students took autographed copies of her books back to their classrooms to pour over the illustrations and study the layers of the story found in the pictures.

Grade 6 student Eleanor Reimer said it was inspiring to meet authors in person.

“I think it could inspire kids to become writers and look at books more,” she said.

Ms. Donogh said the Thin Air International Writers’ Festival gave students an amazing opportunity: “The school partnerships and the connection kids can make with the authors just can’t be beat.”

“I think it could inspire kids to become writers”

AMC GRAND CHIEF VISITS COTE

Students at Children of the Earth (COTE) High School had a chance to meet with the province's highest serving Aboriginal leader when Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak visited on Nov. 17.

Mr. Nepinak said that business development, especially casinos, were the biggest economic assets for first nations.

"We are shifting into a much broader scope of development. We make millions on our casinos every year," he said. "We need young people like yourselves to become educated in business management."

Mining and development also

offer economic opportunities, but Mr. Nepinak said students had to weigh the impacts. "Is this job going to protect the land, or will it destroy the land?"

Grade 12 student Pamela Kennedy agreed with the Grand Chief that education is the key to the future.

"I came here from Bloodvein to finish my education...we need our education to make it farther," she said. "Most of our people are losing our languages, like Ojibwe and Cree."

Pamela added that she planned on going to post-secondary school.

"We can be role models for the younger kids."



Grand Chief Derek Nepinak explained to COTE students that every part of his headdress has meaning, and said it served as an analogy to leadership. "We don't get anywhere in this life if we don't rely on and respect the people around us...this isn't a one man show."

LUXTON SCHOOL WINS FAMILY CHANNEL DANCE PARTY

PHOTO AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

It was a sea of white t-shirts at Luxton School gymnasium. The t-shirts were part of a prize package the school received after one of its students entered a Family Channel contest called "Stand Up."

Family Channel's annual Bullying Awareness Week ran from Nov. 17-23. Leading up to the week, Family Channel series *The Next Step* hosted a dance party with star dancers Jennie Pappas and Alexandra Beaton.

Four elementary schools were chosen from nearly 1,600 entries across Canada. Students were encouraged to enter a contest by telling Family Channel how their school stands up to bullying.

Bentley Ali, a Grade 5 student at Luxton, sent an entry on behalf of her school. Bentley spoke about anti-bullying posters and short plays they have performed, as well as the student leadership group dedicated to social justice.

"I was so excited when I found out.

I sent the entry, but the whole school is the reason why we won, together we are trying to make the school better to stand up to bullying," said Bentley. "I think it is really cool because I am a dancer and they are dancers and I got to hang out with them."

Bentley and her classmates watched an exclusive screening of an *Austin & Ally* episode followed by the 2014 Stand UP! song "I'm Ready" by Canadian band Eleven Past One.

The episode of *Austin & Ally*, "Beauties & Bullies" features Trish getting the lead role in the school play; she drops out because someone is making fun of her online.

After the episode, Wendy Josephson, a psychology professor from the University of Winnipeg, spoke on behalf of the national research organization PREVNet (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network) about bullying in the community and how to prevent it.

More information can be found on Stand UP! at www.family.ca/standup

Family Channel stars Alexandra Beaton (left) and Jennie Pappas (right) from the show *The Next Step* pose for a picture with Luxton School student Bentley Ali.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB



SHARING A MEAL AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

STORY AND PHOTO BY JEFF MILLER

A week before the families sat down for their official Thanksgiving dinner students, staff and community members sat down for a hot turkey dinner at Machray School, thanks to the generous donations and support of the Fairmont Hotel and Qualico.

Penny and her sister, who both have children that attend Machray School said, "We have been coming here to the dinners for the past five years and every year it keeps getting better. The meal is wonderful but it is also nice to meet the teachers and sit down and talk to them as equals and not just someone who teaches my children. It is so meaningful when we can put aside the distractions in life and just sit

down and find out more about each other."

The turkey dinner was prepared and delivered from the Fairmont Hotel and served by staff and volunteers from Qualico.

"When you see all the smiles around the room you know this is something special, lots of laughs, lot's of hugs and everyone just having a great time," Kristy Waldman, guidance counsellor at Machray School.

Of course no meal would be quite complete without a delicious desert and that is exactly what everyone received—homemade brownies courtesy of the culinary students from R.B. Russel Vocational High School.

EVERY GOAL BEGINS WITH A DREAM

PHOTO AND STORY BY JEFF MILLER

Luxton School recently welcomed five-time Olympian and three-time speed skating medalist Susan Auch.

Auch began speed skating at the age of nine on the Sargent Park Oval that now bears her name.

"When I was a little girl my dad told me that if I had a dream and worked at it I could accomplish anything that I want, even to go to the Olympics," Auch said. "What is the worst thing that can happen if you dream and it doesn't come true? You don't succeed. That's ok because you only fail if you don't try. Believe me I failed lots of times before I was successful and even afterwards but I just kept on going because nobody can tell you not to follow your dreams."

Since retiring from speed skating in 2002, Susan has been actively involved in speaking on behalf of Right To Play.

Right To Play's mission is to use sports and games, to teach children essential life skills that will help them overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease so that they can create better futures and drive lasting

social change in their communities and beyond. Founded in 2000 by four-time Olympic gold medalist and social entrepreneur Johann Olav Koss, Right to Play's programs are facilitated by more than 13,500 local volunteer coaches and more than 600 international staff.

Since its inception, Right to Play's focus has been to help impoverished children in war torn countries.

In 2010, Canada's Grand Chiefs approached Right To Play hoping to develop a program to teach life building skills to Aboriginal youth. In just three years, PLAY has expanded from two to 57 first nation and urban communities in Ontario and Manitoba, engaging over 3,300 children and youth.

Each of the PLAY programs is uniquely developed to match the needs of the community with the core fundamental goals of values, skills, knowledge and attitude.

If you would like to get involved with Right To Play please visit their website at www.righttoplay.ca



Five-time Olympian Susan Auch speaks to students at Luxton School.

SISLER STUDENT RECEIVES GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARD

A Sisler High School student received national recognition for his humanitarian efforts after being honoured with a Governor General's Caring Canadian Award.

Beruk Meshesha was presented with the award in Winnipeg prior to WE Day in a special "Evening of Champions" ceremony that included Free the Children founder Craig Kielburger.

Beruk is an active member of Sisler's own Free the Children group, which focuses on social justice and humanitarian projects locally and abroad.

Beruk said he was inspired to join the group by his older brother Nathanael.

"My older brother was previously a leader in this group," Beruk said. "He was able to help create change... and by doing so, he became a better person too."

Through his school's Free the Children group, Beruk has participated in numerous fundraisers for overseas

relief for disasters such as the Haiti earthquake and the Philippines tsunami, helped fund a new school in Kenya through the Brick by Brick program, and helped support local organizations such as Winnipeg Harvest and Siloam Mission.

"All these tiny things we can do as people can make an impact around the world," Beruk said.

Teacher Orysa Petryshyn said Beruk and the other students are helping to spread awareness that many children in the world do not enjoy basic human rights.

"Every child has a right to education, every child has a right to freedom. As a history teacher and an advisor to our Free the Children group, I try to deliver the message to students that we live in the best country in the world...we have these human rights," Ms. Petryshyn said.

The group plans to continue its fundraising and awareness efforts throughout the school year.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

Sisler student Beruk Meshesha and teacher Orysa Petryshyn with food collected during the school's We Scare Hunger campaign.

"BIKE SHARK" ON DUTY

Robertson School has an added level of security for a new bike rack recently installed on school grounds.

The school enlisted R.B. Russell Vocational High School Metal Works students to create a shark-shaped bike rack. Robertson students now have a creative way to secure their prized two-wheelers.

"We worked on it for three weeks," said R.B. Russell student Kayle Wingert. "It's nice to work with your hands and make unique items that people can't buy in stores."

Principal Tony Marchione said students and staff were impressed with the final product—and that it



would fill a need at the school.

"Over the last couple of years we've noticed more and more students riding their bikes to school, but we didn't have a bike rack," he said. "Working together with R.B. Russell, they came up with a great concept and the students got to work on their welding skills. This whole project

had benefits for both schools."

Mr. Marchione added the project wouldn't have been possible without a donation from Maurice Lakusta, a frequent Robertson supporter.

Mr. Lakusta is a retired WSD teacher who worked at Cecil Rhodes, Sargent Park and Tec Voc High schools. His daughter and granddaughters both attended Robertson in years past. As

a result of that family connection, the former teacher has donated to the school many times over the years, supporting the music program, a scoreboard in the gymnasium, the playground and many other projects.

"You get to see your bucks doing things while you're still around," Mr. Lakusta said. "Endowments are good, but you're not around."

SOLVING THE EMPATHY PUZZLE

Students and staff at St. John's High School are currently involved in a project that uses a simple wooden toy to tackle a complex problem: how to teach empathy.

The school's Empathy Toy project builds on other empathy initiatives such as Roots of Empathy, which brings babies and their mothers into elementary classrooms to begin conversations about empathy.

"You can't teach empathy from a text book," said Vice-Principal Cree Crowchild. "Empathy has to be experienced and nurtured."

The Empathy Toy has simple components: slotted wooden blocks that feature a variety of different textured surfaces. Both participants are blindfolded. Player one, who holds a completed version of a puzzle (the blocks can form a variety of different structures), must describe the completed version to player two, who must assemble individual blocks into the same structure.

The toy, built by Twenty One Toys, was featured in the *Huffington Post* and named by *Time* magazine as one of the "six new education tools shaping classrooms of the future."

Creator Illana Ben-Ari originally developed the toy as part of a project with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Now, the product has evolved to have a lesson booklet designed by educational consultants. Once players don their blindfolds,

it quickly becomes apparent just how challenging their task is; the game not only teaches empathy, but can teach handling failure as well.

"You have to use descriptive, expressive language...and you have to be understanding if people get frustrated," Mr. Crowchild said.

"We want people to be frustrated because that's all part of understanding what empathy is."

St. John's is currently the only school in Manitoba to be involved with the Empathy Toy pilot project. Mr. Crowchild demonstrated the toys to a group of Winnipeg School Division administrators at a conference in Hecla earlier this year. Working with the St. John's guidance team, staff members have also tried the toys first hand and are starting to introduce

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

St. John's students Lester Clarke (left) and Adrain Barraza-Luna feel their way through an Empathy Toy exercise.

Empathy Toy exercises to students in the classroom.

"We did a survey with students and very few understood what empathy was," Mr. Crowchild said. "We want to change the culture at the school... so I think by teaching empathy, we're going to see changes in how we treat each other at the school and in the community. At St. John's we believe we're a family—a pride of Tigers—and I believe this tool is helping us do that."

LANGUAGE OF EMPATHY

The school will re-survey students at the end of December, but Mr. Crowchild is optimistic.

"Kids are already starting to use the language of empathy," Mr. Crowchild said. "We're hearing things like 'if that would have happened to me, I

would have felt the same way. So I know what I did wrong."

Student Lester Clarke was in one of two classrooms that initially tried the toy kits; he played the role of the builder.

"I was asking the other player a lot of questions because I wanted every detail on what the structure felt like," Lester said. "We're learning how sometimes we can make a few mistakes, but afterwards, you can fix it."

"I didn't understand what empathy was until we started talking about it, then I remembered how we had learned about it in elementary. It's good to know how other people feel... and how you're feeling."

Mr. Crowchild will be discussing the project along with educator Pasi Sahlberg in an upcoming edition of *Forbes* magazine.

NAVIGATING THE NORTHERN FRONTIER

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEB

An Elmwood High School student visited the northern frontier of Arctic science during a voyage on board the *CCGS Amundsen*.

Grade 12 student Stephanie Chacon-Vega boarded the ship in late-September as part of ArcticNet's Schools on Board program. The national outreach program, which is based out of the University of Manitoba, focuses on bridging Arctic climate change research and high school science.

During the voyage from Kugluktuk to Iqaluit, students joined researchers and scientists in their daily work.

Along with finding their sea legs (and dealing with a bit of seasickness), students also had to learn ship safety procedures—a necessity in the face of a harsh environment.

"There were parts of the trip that were open sea, and others where the ice was so thick you could hear it scraping the side of the ship," Stephanie said, adding that the students saw whales and polar bears on their trip.

During the day, students would attend scientific lectures to learn more about the studies and research techniques used on the ship. Students also conducted sampling alongside scientists, using methods like box

Stephanie Chacon-Vega was one of ten Canadian high school students on board the CCGS Amundsen in late-September/early-October.

coring (which samples organisms at the bottom of the ocean) and the Agassiz trawl, which can collect from higher zones of the ocean.

"I liked sorting through the samples from the Agassiz trawl—we would wash off the mud and identify the organisms according to charts they had," Stephanie said. "There were some strange looking worms and I found a large starfish too."

Stephanie presented photos and videos from her trip during a special presentation to her sponsors and Elmwood parents on Nov. 27. Sponsors for the trip included Nick Logan of National Leasing, Ross Ransby and Robin Lee of Pre-Con Builders, Winnipeg School Division, the Elmwood Legacy Committee, and Elmwood staff.

FAMILY CONNECTION

Principal Mr. Babb's son (and Grant Park alumnus) David Babb was also at the presentation. The younger Babb had been a member of the first Schools On Board trip 10 years ago, as a Grade 11 student. Today, he sometimes travels on the ship as a research associate with the U of M's Centre for Earth Observation Science; his studies of the changing icescape have taken him to areas such as the Beaufort Sea, Hudson's Bay and Greenland. It was that high school trip

aboard the *Amundsen* that planted the seeds of Mr. Babb's future career.

"It became my goal to get back on that ship as a scientist. We got to see scientists as real people who were inspired to work in the area and cared so much about what they were doing."

Coincidentally, Mr. Babb was just finishing a tour on the *Amundsen* just as Stephanie and her fellow students were waiting to go aboard. They had a chance to chat while the students were awaiting a helicopter onto the ship.

MAKING A LASTING IMPRESSION

Three Sisler High School teachers journeyed to Churchill in early October to take part in the first ever Science of the North interactive conference.

Teachers Myriam Bara, Paul Buskell and Kaye Gaudreau were able to share their experiences with their students through videos, photos and artifacts. Thanks to video conferencing technology, Sisler students were also able to hear from local scientists, provincial park police and Churchill students during the conference.

"Churchill students prepared presentations that were live streamed to schools all over the world. There was Sisler and schools in places like New York, Europe, Australia and New Zealand," Ms. Bara said. "Our students were able to email

questions and see presentations about the lifestyle, the plant life and the weather in Churchill."

Polar bears are a regular part of life in Churchill, although sometimes they get too close—necessitating a catch and release program.

"The traps are these big metal cylinders with a cage on one side and a trap on the other, and there are signs all over warning people not to go inside them," Ms. Bara said. "They had a polar bear jail for problem bears that get too close...we saw a mom and cub getting released. When they're taking the bears out of town, they sedate them and carry them away by helicopter."

DISTANCE COSTS

Due to the remoteness of Churchill

it's accessible only by plane or train. Food we take for granted in Winnipeg can be expensive and hard to come by in the northern town.

"There's one store...you could buy a snowmobile in the same aisle that you could buy pickles," Ms. Bara said. "The cost of living is high up there... we found a ham that cost \$47 and a four litre of milk costs \$11."

Some students said they would like to one day make their own journey to Churchill.

"The environment seems so different than what we have here. It would be a good experience to go there and see it," said student Trisha Lumbers.

To that end, plans are in the works at Sisler to fundraise for a student trip to Churchill in 2015.

Two polar bears catch some downtime near Churchill, MB.

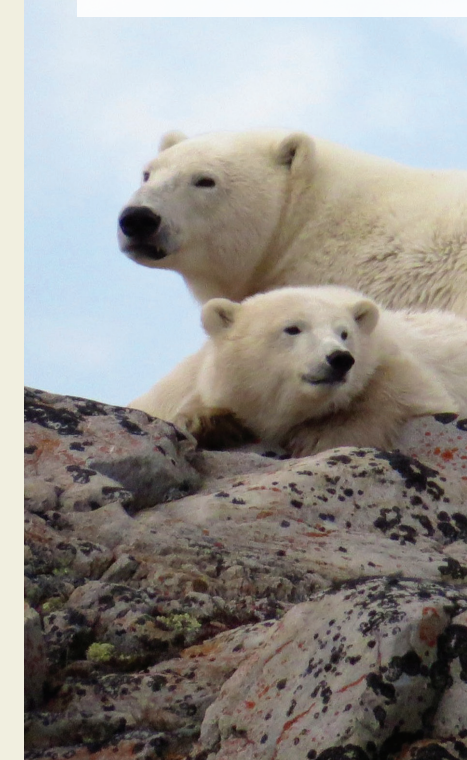


Photo by Kaye Gaudreau

NATIONAL HONOUR FOR SISLER TECH TEACHER

Sisler High School teacher Jamie Leduc has earned one of the country's highest teaching honours after being selected for a Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

The educator, who was awarded in the Certificate of Achievement category, was the only Manitoba teacher to be recognized in 2014.

Since coming to Sisler in 2007, Mr. Leduc has developed Sisler's Digital Voices program, a vocational media course in which students digitally document and share cultural stories, artifacts and experiences.

"Something that I've always tried to do with my classes is focus on the fundamentals of art, culture and story, and then layer-in digital technology," said Mr. Leduc, who came from Ottawa and a Fine Arts background to teach at Sisler. "I think it's easier to teach this generation how to use technology than it is to teach them how to be creative, how to think outside the box and come up with solid concepts. That's the challenge...if you can teach the kids those skills, they're going to run with the technology."

Mr. Leduc also designed

SoapBoxEd, an educational speaker series that uses video-conferencing and other online formats to present debates, speaker series, live surgeries and mock trials to students in Canada and the United States. The program has reached a student audience of over 8,000 in approximately 100 provincial and international classrooms.

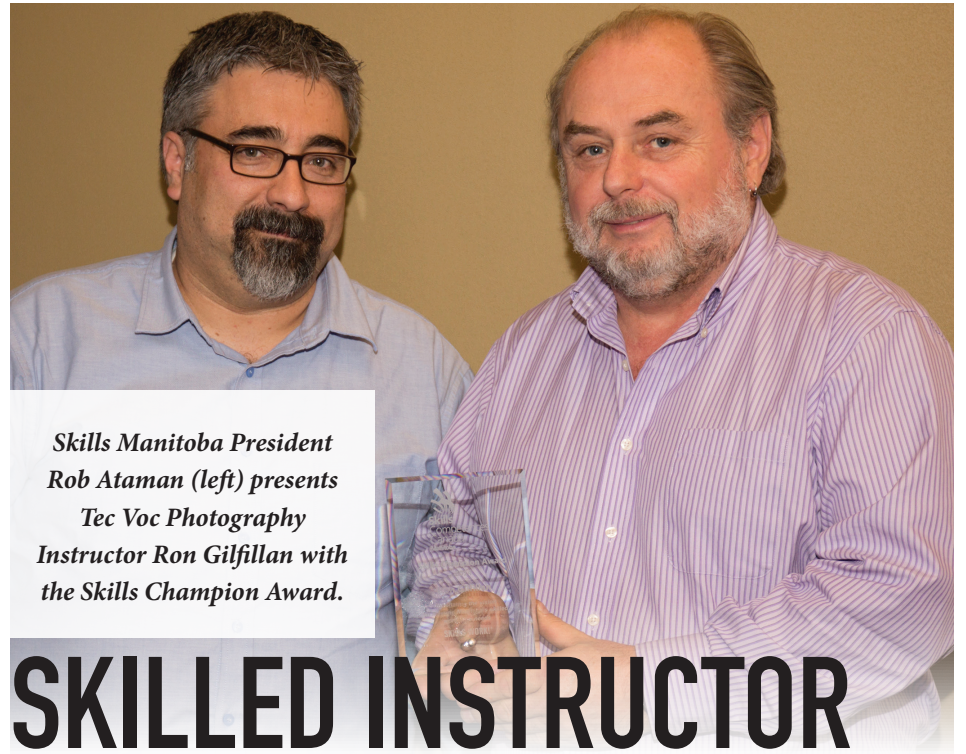
"SoapBoxEd started as a student version of Ted Talks," Mr. Leduc said.

Guests have included Hollywood animators, comic artists, an astronaut from the Canadian Space Agency and more.

Mr. Leduc is quick to credit Principal George Heshka for supporting teachers and students in pushing the limits of technology and educational programming.

"It starts from the top...if Mr. Heshka sees the benefit for the kids, he'll go for it," Mr. Leduc said.

Previously, Mr. Leduc was instrumental in Sisler being named one of the Intelligent Communities Forum's top seven locations, and as well was the recipient of an Adobe Educators' Choice Award and a Microsoft Partner in Learning.



Skills Manitoba President Rob Ataman (left) presents Tec Voc Photography Instructor Ron Gilfillan with the Skills Champion Award.

SKILLED INSTRUCTOR

Photography instructor Ron Gilfillan received Skills Manitoba's Skills Champion award for his commitment to teaching photography to Tec Voc students.

Gilfillan is a successful and committed teacher who ensures his students are at the center of their photography experiences at Skills Manitoba competitions. His generous spirit is at the center of his work and

is reflected in the thousands upon thousands of photographs he has taken over the years.

The Skills Champion award is presented to individuals and/or organizations who have excelled in promoting skilled trades and technologies to youth, and creating opportunities for youth and industry to connect.

– Photo and files courtesy of Tec Voc

CORRECTIONS (From the Sept. 2014 edition)

Page 14, "Ideas take flight"
Student Kayla Nilles' name was incorrectly spelled in the photo caption.

Page 24, "Young citizens set high goals"
Grant Park High School student Lana Tennenhouse was mistakenly referred to as attending Kelvin.

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