

Chinook's Edge students bring excitement home from national science fair

Claire Friesen brings home bronze for her aerodynamics research



Two Chinook's Edge students have returned from the national science fair held in Ottawa, Ontario last week, filled with excitement for science and the new friends they've made. Jillian Reid, a Grade 7 student, and Claire Friesen, a Grade 8 student, both from Cremona School were able to participate in the event, held May 25 to June 1, after qualifying at the regional science fair.

Claire Friesen received a bronze award at the national science fair for her project called "Preventing Flow Separation Using Known and Novel Methods". Friesen was in the junior level which is for Grade 7 and 8 students. According to Judith Friesen, Claire's mother, there were 30 bronze, 20 silver and 10 gold medals available at the junior level, as well as intermediate (Gr. 9/10) and senior (Gr. 11/12). She said there were 381 finalists, including 117 at the junior level.

"We are so proud of Claire and Jillian for the way they represented Cremona School and the school division. They are great ambassadors," said Darryl Korody, Principal. "Also congratulations to Claire for receiving a bronze medal for her project."

Reinforcing a passion for aerodynamics

Claire Friesen's project examined vortex generators, a device that is placed on the wings of an aircraft. They can be used to increase lift, prevent stalls and reduce drag. Also, they can be placed on larger vehicles to increase fuel efficiency. Friesen's project considered conventional designs as well as her own designs, and compared the amount of turbulent airflow.

Friesen attended the national science fair last year as well, and this year's project was inspired from the work she did in 2023.

"Last year I looked at how airflow changed around different designs and shapes of aerofoil. A judge mentioned vortex generators to me. A couple searches and I was fascinated. My previous project started a fascination with aerodynamics and flight, one I believe will follow me through life, if not through my science fair projects," said Friesen.



Friesen said next year she plans to expand her current project to improve it and discover new areas of research. ***“I received incredible suggestions from all seven of my judges on where I could improve and expand my project for the future,” she said.***

Exploring age and reaction times

Jillian Reid’s project was called “Thinking reaction”, involved measuring reaction time for people of different age categories. Reid measured sight reactions and motor reactions of 35 people, divided into seven age categories. Her conclusion was that people in the 35 to 50 year old range had the best reaction time.

“I was surprised at the result,” said Reid. “I expected that younger people would have had faster reaction times. I wonder if older people have more experience and that impacted the result, but I would need to investigate that further.

Reid said in the future she might explore that, but she has other ideas to pursue too. For instance, she is curious about how temperature and moisture impact the growth of berry crops.



The experience of being at a national science focused event

Both Friesen and Reid thoroughly enjoyed being at the science fair, and a highlight for both of them was meeting other young scientists.

“It was a really cool experience to meet so many people, and it was amazing how many projects were there” said Reid, saying she enjoyed getting to know Friesen and the other two students from Central Alberta who traveled to the event. Also, she made friends with the students who displayed their projects next to hers. ***“I have friends from all over Canada now.”*** Reid said she also enjoyed pin trading with other science fair participants.

Friesen said her favorite part of the science fair was ***“meeting all of the people - 381 other like minded finalists with a love for STEM. All finalists are so happy to be there, they are willing to discuss their projects with everyone and are truly interested and helpful.”***



Also both Friesen and Reid loved traveling to another part of Canada. Reid said a highlight for her was getting on the hop on-hop off bus' as it toured Ottawa.

"We got to see so many things," said Friesen: "The Museum of Nature, the War Museum, a bus tour of Ottawa with a stop at the RCMP to see the musical ride, which was incredible. Seeing the synchronization was amazing," she said. What topped it all for Friesen, however, was meeting Canadian astronaut, Jeremy Hansen.

Thank you to teachers who make a difference

Both Friesen and Reid said they appreciate the teachers and mentors who have encouraged and supported their interest in science.

Principal Darryl Korody also thanked Cremona School's staff for their ongoing support of the science fair. ***"Especially thanks to our coordinator, Chelsea Sheppard, and to Grade 7 science teacher, John Templeton. John makes time in his schedule to give students a chance to prepare science fair projects. He also gets them interested, engaged and excited about investigating a science topic," said Korody.***



10th annual Soapbox Derby brings Delburne community together in support of youth



See video highlights!
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Delburne School hosted its 10th annual Soapbox Derby on Friday, May 31st, an event the whole community eagerly anticipates and supports. It's a project that harkens back to simpler times, and one that brings generations and community together.

The Soapbox Derby at Delburne School sees Grade 8 students create soap box cars over a period of several months. Starting with a kit ordered from Manitoba, along with purchased plywood, each student and their partner builds a go-kart like vehicle from scratch, paints it and equips it with wheels and a steering mechanism.

The students must also write letters and approach local businesses to find sponsors for their vehicle, which is how the project is funded each year.

In addition, each student serves on a committee that supports the various aspects of the project; the committees include awards, race day set up, scheduling, video / documentation, organizing the sponsorship night event, and creating thank yous for sponsors.

In total, 15 cars raced this year in a double elimination event, on a road in the village that slopes downwards, and is temporarily closed to regular traffic. At times, during the races, wheels fell off leaving a clear winner. Other times the two vehicles that scooted down the ramp, and down the road, were neck and neck to the finish line, only stopping at the line of tire bumpers.

In between heats, younger students filled the street for a dance off.



“The students look forward to the Soapbox Derby every year,” said Cheryle Bourne, the teacher who leads the project at Delburne School. “They love building their own vehicle and the day of the race is always exciting. Our community is very supportive and we are grateful.”

Jocelyn Pennock, Principal of Delburne School, said, ***“The annual Soapbox Derby is an incredible event that bridges our school and our community. It is so special to watch our students work with the Village of Delburne and our local sponsors to make this event such a huge success. We love watching our streets lined with students, parents and community members cheering on our racers.”***

Bourne said she first came up with the idea when the province changed its curriculum to include Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) courses for junior high students. She knew building the vehicles would give students experience with building and construction, fulfilling CTF requirements. She also anticipated some cross curricular opportunities like using math for measuring and building, and English for writing sponsorship request letters.

Last year was the first group of Grade 8 students to have seen the races ever since they were in kindergarten. This year’s class has also watched with anticipation for many years.





Kayley Babb, a Grade 8 student said, ***“I think it’s a good lesson to learn if you run a business. It was stressful thinking they could turn us down, because without a sponsor there are no cars or an event. But it was nice talking about our project and most agreed to sponsor us. They asked us lots of questions. It was way easier than I thought.”***

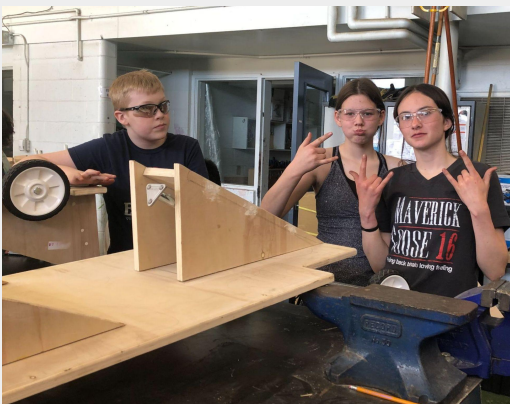
Babb said she has anticipated this event since she was in kindergarten, and she found it both exciting and nerve-wracking. ***“We are doing this in front of the whole school. All eyes are on you,”*** she said. ***“But also it’s exciting to think that we are role models for the younger students, like the role models we looked up to.”***

Students say derby helps them prepare for the future

“I couldn’t wait to try it,” said Jaelyn Cummings, a Delburne Grade 8 student, who has attended Delburne School since kindergarten. ***“It looked like it would be a fun and cool experience, especially getting to design your own car.”*** Cummings said the experience was great, but also hard when considering talking with potential sponsors. ***“They were way nicer than I expected. This project makes us more mature in working and planning skills.”***

“I liked that we got to pick our own partners, and design our own cars,” said Juliet Williams, a Grade 8 student. ***“We got to be in control. It helps us prepare for the future and get ready for a job. It gives us an idea about being adults and managing money and being responsible.”*** Williams said she learned that ***“communication is key”*** when working with a partner.

“I thought it was interesting to learn about how to build things and measure and read instructions,” said Dante Meissner, a Grade 8 student. Meissner said he appreciated the opportunity to talk with sponsors. ***“I liked that we got to meet people who started their own businesses. They were quite nice.”***





Community eagerly anticipates event

Dozens of community members cheered on the racers on Friday. Many were from Delburne, but some are from elsewhere and came to Delburne especially for the races.

Susan Yaworski lives in Red Deer and owns property in the Delburne area. Last year, she and her husband just happened to be driving through Delburne when the Soapbox races were underway. ***“It was so fun that we stayed to watch, and then I just had to look it up and come again this year,” she said.***



Yaworski brought a friend too. ***“It’s a nice event to see the kids so excited and it’s fun to see their cars,” said Yaworski.***

Karyn Deucher also lives in Red Deer, but has grandchildren attending Delburne School. ***“I think this is good for kids because it shows them how to work together as they build the cars, and use their creativity.”***

Delburne resident, and proud grandparent, Cheryl Babb said, ***“This teaches the students so many things, like using math and tools and assembly skills. Also, it’s about connection. It brings a lot together in a little town.”***



Student Jaelyn Cummings agrees. ***“It’s an event that brings us all together,” she said. “It’s not just our school. Lots of citizens come out. I think that says they care about us and they know it’s important to us and it is to them too.”***

