

## C.P. Blakely student becomes published author, collaborating with friends on adventure book series

Regular trips over many years from Sylvan Lake to grandparents living in Saskatchewan have always been a great adventure for 11 year old Cohen Bojda.

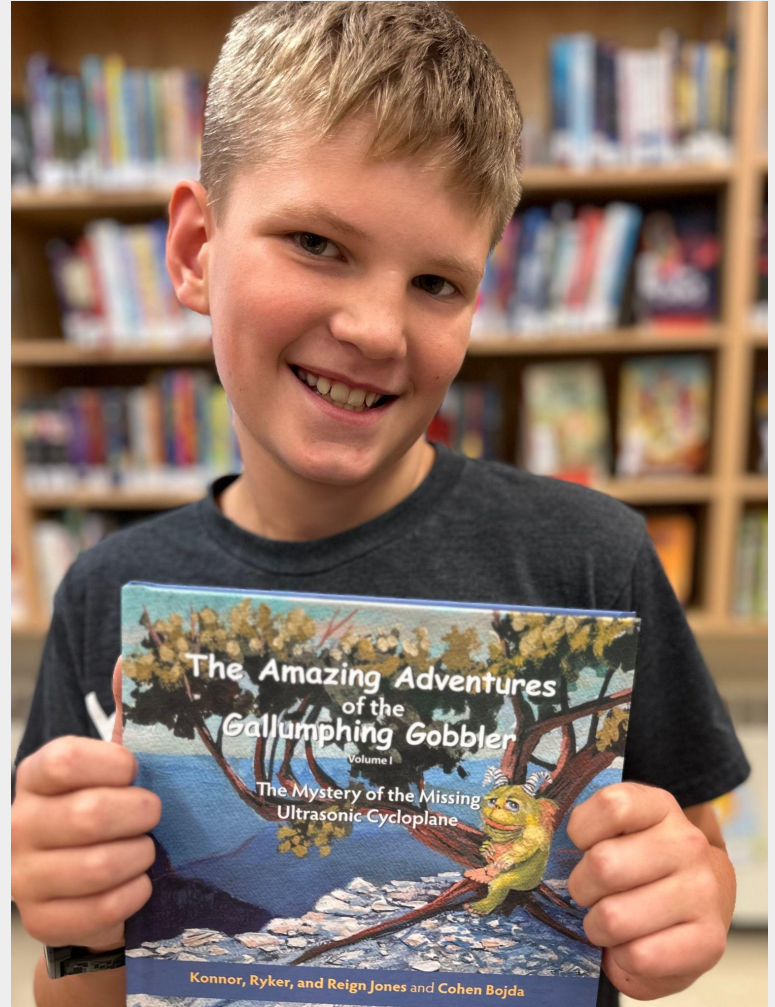
But what started as a family visit, and play time with a neighborhood family of boys his grandparents introduced Cohen to, has now turned into an even bigger adventure. Cohen and his three Saskatchewan friends, Konnor, Ryker and Reign Jones have become published authors.

Together they authored *The Amazing Adventures of the Gallumphing Gobbler*, with some help from David Schleich, a retired post-secondary institution president and Ph.D., and current president of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild.

Also, a touching addition to the project are the book's colourful illustrations, created by Cohen's grandfather and Sacha's Dad, Darrell Baschak, a Canadian landscape painter and artist.

***"The story is about the four of us boys, and the adventure we have with the Gallumphing Gobbler," says Cohen.***

***"We find a model plane and build it but then lose it in the forest after trying to fly it. I can't tell you more [about the plot] without spoiling it, but the Gallumphing Gobbler may have had something to do with the missing plane."***



Above: Cohen Bojda, a Grade 6 C.P. Blakely School student.

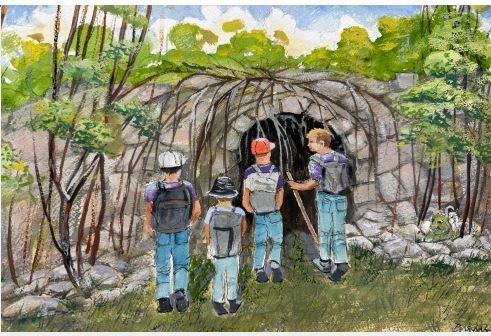
Below left: The four authors with their mentor, David Schleich, sharing ideas and planning their book several years ago.

Below right: Cohen with his parents Sacha and Tony, and CP Blakely Principal Anne Frey.

Next page, top: Images from the book created by Darrell Baschak

Next page image on bottom right: the authors with artist Darrell Baschak, artist (left), Les Jones - Dad of three of the authors (middle) and David Schleich, mentor (right).





***“The Gallumphing Gobbler is kind of like a monkey,” explains Cohen. “He doesn’t speak, but he is smart.”***

***Cohen says, “I love every bit of the story. It’s one of the best stories I’ve ever read, and my favorite story that I’ve written.”***

Cohen’s Mom, Sacha Bojda, says the book came together gradually over a number of years, starting when Cohen was six years old. When her family would visit her parents in Saskatchewan, Cohen and his three friends would sometimes get together with Schleich who would help the boys' imagined ideas take shape, and write them down.

***“David started the idea of writing the book,” says Cohen. “We would give ideas and he would ask questions about our ideas to give them more detail.”***

***“We knew David was writing a book with them, and we thought it was a fun idea,” says Sacha, also a substitute teacher in Chinook’s Edge School Division. “We appreciated the opportunity for team work, and figuring out problems.”***

Cohen’s Dad, Tony Bojda, a Chinook’s Edge employee in the Facilities Department, says his son has always loved reading and has a flair for story telling. ***“He’s been making comic strips and characters for a long time.”***

After several years of visits and imagining their story, Schleich felt the boys had enough to publish, and since he was familiar with the process, he was able to shepherd the book through to its completion.

***“We had no idea it was going to turn into something like this,” says Tony. He says the boys and their families are pleased with how well it is being received. According to the Bojda’s, the book is selling well in Canada, and has become a hit in Germany where fans of the book are asking for swag and stuffies, and a sequel, which is already in the works.***

David Schleich says that as an educator, he took on the project, observing that there is a lack of opportunities for ***“youngsters to stretch and grow their imaginations.”*** Schleich says, ***“With permission to tell an unfettered story, coaching in some of the language, [the boys’] tale took flight. The reward for me is the product of their imagination and the exponential energy of their collaboration. I can attest to the power released into civil society by such permission and support for unfettered expression.”***

***“I don’t know if Cohen knows what a big deal this is,” says Sacha. “We think this is a real opportunity for kids like Cohen and his friends to see that you don’t have to be 50 years old to achieve something like this.***

***“It shows that something simple like getting together with friends, and doing that consistently, can turn into something valuable,” says Tony.***

***“It has been super exciting for us too, to have a real live author at school,”*** says Anne Frey, Principal of C.P. Blakely School. Frey says the school is planning a type of book tour, with Cohen sharing some of his book with classes during their library times in October.

Cohen continues to meet with his three friends now more often than in the past, accommodated by online sessions, to begin developing a sequel. Details of the plot are still in creation, but anxiously awaited by new fans of the Gallumphing Gobbler!



## Donation of new bikes propels Westglen School's mechanics class into high gear



Pedaling into its second year, the bike mechanics class at Westglen School in Didsbury has really picked up speed. A donation of 18 high end, extra light alloy bikes, each worth hundreds of dollars, was delivered to the school this fall, thanks to the collaboration of a handful of organizations and people.

***"I was at the Salesforce conference last fall and Woom\*, shared that they had partnered with Salesforce on a community project there," says Bilton. "Because Woom is located in Austin, Texas, it took some time to figure out how to get the bikes to Westglen School, but we did it. The board sends its thanks to everyone who made this happen. The board is always excited to find new and innovative ways for students to engage in learning."***

The bike mechanics class began in the fall of 2023 with an idea from Westglen teacher Dustin Moreau, who saw that his middle school students had an interest in mechanics. He wanted to give them an age-appropriate and hands-on way of learning those skills, and applying them in real life.



The Chinook's Edge Board approved a \$5,000 innovation grant, and in 2023 the grant was used to purchase 10 mobile bike stands, 10 mobile tool carts and the appropriate tools to fill them. Throughout the year, and with the 48 participating Grade 8 students, Moreau worked hard to find used bikes in the community that the students could work on.

The donation of the new bikes, ***“really gears up the program”*** says Carolyn Massel, Principal, Westglen School. ***“It gives students an even better experience.”***

Massel anticipates another 48 students will participate this year, with the class being offered to Grade 7 students as well as Grade 8 students.

\*Bilton says bicycle manufacturer, Woom, donated the bikes. Trucking company Westcore Links transported them to Didsbury, and the Didsbury Coop unloaded them in their larger lot and delivered them to the school's smaller lot. Rutherford Global helped with cross-border brokerage.

***“It was truly a combined effort, and everyone was so great about it because they all wanted to help the students,”*** says Bilton.



Photo previous page: Westglen teacher Dustin Moreau and Board Chair Holly Bilton.

Photos this page: Westglen students working with the newly donated bikes.



# 142 Chinook's Edge students earn a Chromebook

## Chinook's Edge Jumpstart program sees 32% growth in credits earned this summer

Dozens of Chinook's Edge students have been receiving new Chromebooks in the past two weeks, because of their learning over the summer. There are 142 students who completed at least six credits in the Jumpstart online program over the summer.

Jumpstart gives students a foundation in the Google operating environment, which is a strong preparation for learning in high school. In the past, the course was generally offered to students entering Grade 9 or 10. This year the opportunity was extended to any student entering a Chinook's Edge high school in the fall, regardless of grade.

In total, 186 students from all of the division's high schools participated in the Jumpstart program, with 142 students earning six credits. There was a 32 per cent increase in the number of credits earned in 2024, compared to 2023. Congratulations to the students who completed Jumpstart!



Spruce View School



Didsbury High School



Ecole Olds School



Sudre High School

