

Belfountain students win big in energy diet challenge

By Bill Rea

A lot of good work for the environment has been taking place at Belfountain Public School, and more recognition was added recently.

The school, and particularly the Grade 2 class, was presented with the grand prize for the best elementary school video in the 2014 Classroom Energy Diet Challenge (CEDC). The challenge is run by Shell Canada and Canadian Geographic.

The company reported there were more than 1,200 classrooms from all over the country entered in the competition, demonstrating how they have raised their energy awareness and learned how to manage and reduce their consumption of energy.

The winning entry was produced by the Grade 2 students of Andrea Broersma.

They were presented last week with a cheque for \$2,500, which is to go toward technical enhancements for the school.

The student body was gathered to see the presentation, as Principal called it a "very exciting" occasion.

"This is an incredible school," declared Trustee Stan Cameron, local representative on the Peel District School Board. "You are the champions."

"I am so excited to be here this morning," commented Darlene Klassen, advisor of social investment with Shell Canada Limited.

"They did an amazing job."

Klassen stressed the importance of young people knowing where energy comes from and how it's created. She also pointed to the importance of conservation and energy literacy.

Ellen Curtis, educational program manager with the Royal Canadian Geographic Society, put the students through a quiz aimed at establishing various environmental and energy-related facts. For example, she said it takes more water to create a leather jacket than a pair of jeans or a 750-sheet pad of white paper.

Cars and trucks produce more greenhouse gases than construction equipment or indoor heating and air-conditioning.

Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson was impressed that more than 1,200 other classes were involved in the competition. "That tells you how good this video was," he remarked.

Broersma expressed appreciation for all the support her class received in making the video, pointing out help came from students in other grades.

"You were our biggest fans," she said.

She also thanked the parents "for sending me these amazing kids."

Broersma said she heard about the challenge from a friend who teaches at another school.

"I got really into it," she recalled. "I got really excited."

She added the students were quick to get enthused.

"They kind of took control of it," she said. "They completely surprised me. They amazed me. They learned a ton of stuff."



Belfountain Olympian Jake Holden joined Grade 2 students at Belfountain Public School as they received the grand prize for the best elementary school video in the 2014 Classroom Energy Diet Challenge. Photo by Bill Rea