



Students raise more than they expected for London Children's Hospital

SUBMITTED

St. Mary's Catholic School in West Lorne is very proud of Kelsey Slater and its Grade 8 class, who raised over \$1,400 between April 22 and April 28 for London's Children's Hospital. Slater (Grade 7) and teacher Sharon Stockman came up with the idea of a fundraising campaign. The photo on the right shows (top row) Kelsey Slater, Meaghan Campigatto, Mackenzie Tobias, Sharon Stockman, Ryan Frizzel and Josh Simpson. Those students were the team reps and got to talk about their campaign on BX93 in London.

Students raise money for hospital

Students of St. Mary's Catholic School in West Lorne are feeling great after exceeding their fundraising goal for London Children's Hospital.

Teacher Sharon Stockman, her grade 8 students and grade 7 student Kelsey Slater started collecting for the Children's Hospital April 22. They had a goal of collecting \$200, but they surprised themselves by raising over seven times that much, \$1,475, which they handed over April 30.

"I was crying. We tallied it up, and I was just so overwhelmed with pride. I was just so proud of them," said Stockman. "It just goes to show what working together can do."

Stockman was inspired to start this fundraising campaign because of Kelsey Slater. Slater was born with a heart disease

and spent her first month in the London Children's hospital. Now 13, Slater has been collecting money for the hospital for years. When Slater went to Stockman for a donation, Stockman had the idea for a larger fundraising effort involving her students. Slater said she's never been apart of a larger fundraiser before.

"If it wasn't for Children's Hospital, I wouldn't be alive," said Slater. "I wanted to give back to the hospital for what they did for me. I wanted to give some money back."

The students, or "Change Bandits", went around the school and community collecting money. The Deputy Change Bandits got to hand over the money they raised and visit the BX 93 radio station in London where they met and got interviewed by Dave and Jacque of Dave and Jacque in the Morning.

"It was pretty neat. When you listen to the radio, you kind of picture what they look like, so it was nice to see the face behind it," said Meaghan Campigatto, grade 8. "Our goal was \$200, and we managed to raise over \$1,400. It's pretty amazing considering we're a small school and we pulled together to raise that much."

Other students who visited the station included Josh Simpson, Mackenzie Tobias, Ryan Frizzel and Kelsey Slater. Mackenzie Tobias also has some personal history with the Children's Hospital; 11 hours after her brother was born, he needed bowel surgery. Tobias' brother, Cameron, is healthy now at 8 months old.

"It feels good to know that we could meet our goal and that other people care about sick people," said Tobias.



Soapstone Carving.

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Instruction in soapstone carving was offered at West Elgin Secondary School (WESS) May 20 by Robert Morgan of London. WESS students learned in the morning and students from West Elgin Senior Elementary went in the afternoon. Above, Grade 7 students Jordan McColl and Stevie Baran polished their carvings.

EDUCATION 2009

► Students at St. Mary's Catholic School got ready for St. Valentine's Day by making some Valentine's Cards Feb. 9. Grade 5 students worked with the Sr. Kindergarteners



Paul Dieker and Nolan Schneckeburger



Danny McAuliffe and Nicky Mendonca

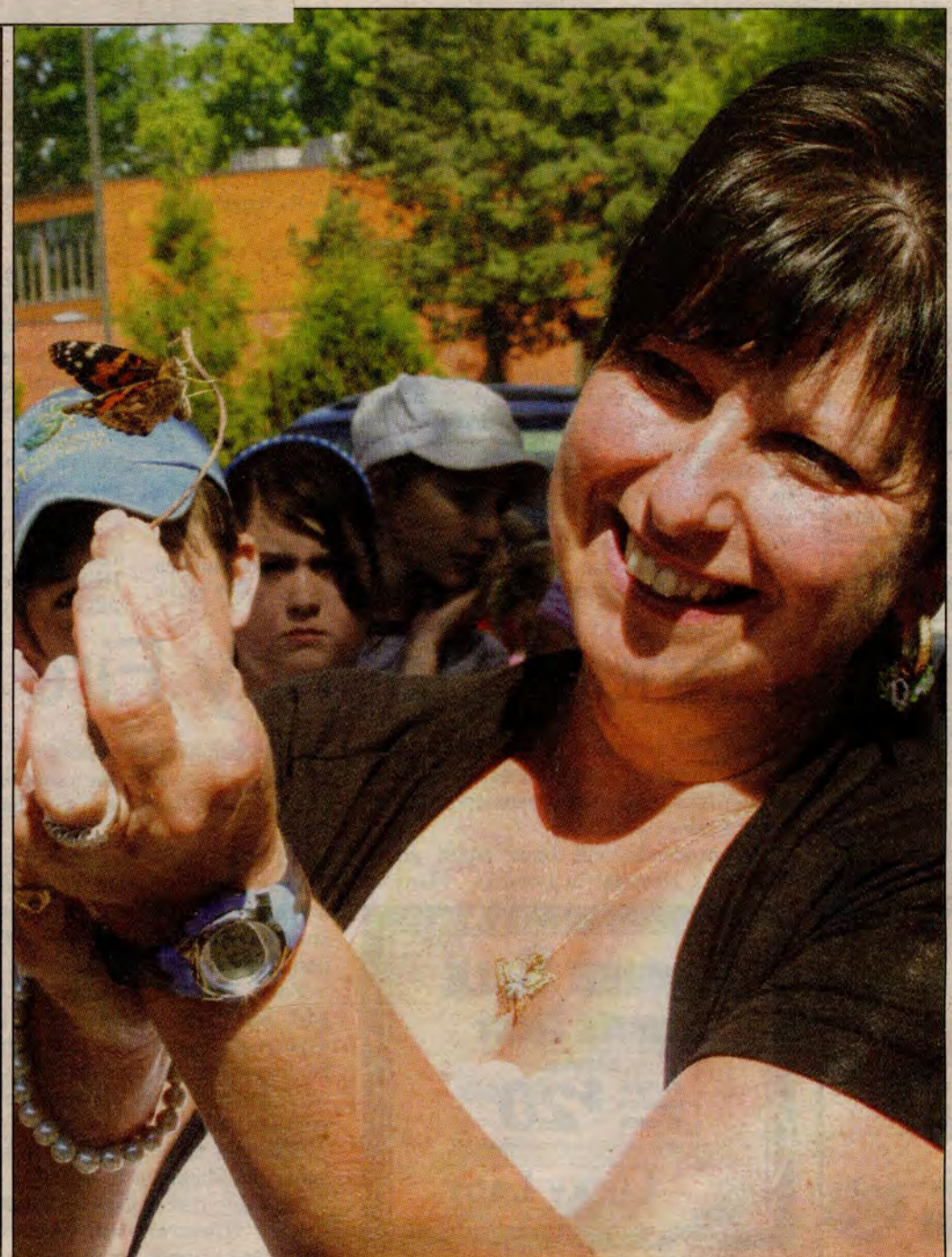


Alicia McReady and Alexandra Blackhall

PHOTOS BY JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE



SUN MEDIA PHOTO
West Elgin's Rae Hale (12) works around the defence of St. Joseph's Ram Cassie Quinn (30) on Nov. 4 at the Tommy White Athletic Centre. The host Rams beat the Wildcats 65-23 in the TVRAA South senior girls basketball playoff opener. The WESS Junor Girls played against Central Elgin the same day and won with a score of 33-27.



St. Mary's Peace Garden.

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

St. Mary's Catholic School teacher Mary Jane Buck and her class released some Monarch butterflies in the school's Peace Garden June 15. Mrs. Buck's class raised the butterflies since they were caterpillars. The school received a grant to clean up the garden in front of the school and expand it into an outdoor learning centre. Students are busy clearing out weeds, and putting in plants that will attract butterflies and birds. The outdoor learning centre should provide students with the opportunity to learn about conservation, biodiversity, gardening and native plants.

GREEN is the New Black

West Elgin Environmental Club

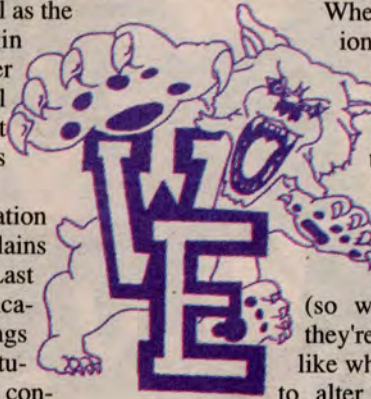
There is a mutual goal for schools this year in West Lorne, Dutton, Rodney and surrounding areas, and that is to become an 'EcoSchool.' It's not easy to be EcoSchool certified as Mr. Kajan, a grade 10 Geography teacher as well as the leader of WESS' West Elgin Environmental Club explains. Ever since Heart Lake Secondary School in Brampton became the first school to be EcoSchool certified it's become a growing trend.

There are 3 different certification levels of being an EcoSchool explains Kajan; bronze, silver, and gold. Last year WESS landed the silver certification. Environmental Club meetings occur every other Wednesday as students brainstorm and discuss what contributions and efforts they can put forward towards reaching their goal. Kajan laughs as he explains that the male students of West Elgin aren't as enthusiastic towards reaching the school's environmental goal, seeing as every member of the Environmental Club is a girl. Members of the club

spread the word by making occasional announcements, informing other students of their progress and ideas, and urging fellow students to sign up and join the cause.

When asked of Kajan's personal opinion on what WESS' biggest environmental problem he stated that people are not quite willing to change their ways, "no one wants to leave their comfort zone." Nobody wants to wear the hemp clothing, go organic, or change all their light bulbs in their house to the more energy efficient ones (so what if they're more expensive, they're brighter and last longer). People like where they are now, they don't want to alter their lifestyle, "nobody likes change," Kajan says while shaking his head.

Little by little the West Elgin Environmental Club is making a difference, little by little they're making a change for the better. In the words of Mr. Kajan, "if you make the time, you can do anything you want to."



West Elgin Environmental Club: from top left to write Brandon Caughell, Mr. Kajan; leader of club as well as grade 10 geography teacher, Breanne Carter, Vanessa Roodzant and Brittany Black. From bottom left to right Stephanie Duarte and Sam Hamelin. Absent students include Lydia Stone, Janice Parcels, and Jocelyn Weis.

St. Mary's Giving it Their All

It's no surprise that the environmental issues of today are reaching out to the younger ages in hopes of raising awareness as early as possible. Mary Jane Buck, a kinder-garten teacher at St. Mary's Catholic School explains that the students in her class are already very enthusiastic about protecting the environment.

This year the West Elgin Environmental Club has offered to give St. Mary's \$300 if the school participates in doing something environmentally friendly. So far the school has come up with three ideas they'd like to pursue. The first idea is improving the Peace Garden, which was made 8 years ago by staff and students. The second idea is going on a class field trip to Joe's Bush, a natural nature preserve. The last idea is having the entire class participate in raising their own butter-

flies.

Environmental efforts being done within the school right now include planting a tree in the yard every year, recycling each week, once a month Litter-less Lunch days, and Trash Talk Thursdays. Every Thursday students take turns reading off statistics (like how many plastic bags are in the average dump) to the class in hopes of raising awareness.

Buck hopes to see more effort and participation towards the Litter-less Lunch days. Buck adds on that it would also really make a difference if staff could stop eating off paper plates.

"Awareness has really been raised here at St. Mary's" Buck states, the students are enthusiastic and coming up with new ideas everyday to go green while the staff are working hard to achieve the environmental goals the school sets.

WESS art students get work on display

Continued from last week is a look at the WESS students whose art has been selected to be part of the People in the Picture exhibit at the Museum of London, which is open until June 7. Read more on page 7!



SUBMITTED



Working with nature.

A painting by Cassy Kelly of WESS is on display at the Museum of London. Cassy hasn't seen the exhibit yet herself but she plans on going soon. She hopes to work as an interior decorator someday.

WESS student Cassy Kelly, was surprised when he found out her art had been chosen to be put on display at the Museum of London.

"I was really surprised they wanted it. I had visions of them being all 'what is this?' and throwing it out," she said. "I was so happy. All of my friends got sick and tired of me saying how happy I was."

The work of 120 Thames valley students was selected to be a part of the People in the Picture exhibit. Cassy is one of five WESS students who made the final cut. Her oil painting of a female face amidst green vegetation fits with her art class' theme of man working with or against nature. She finished the painting in late December.

"It shows that if you just relax and let yourself be, we can work together better with nature than we are right now," she said.

Cassy plans to pursue a career in interior decorating, which uses colour theory that she's developing as a young artist.

"I've always liked drawing, but I only recently started taking art classes," said Cassy. "It's just so versatile. You can blend the colours and make your own. You don't have to stick to what's given to you. You can show emotion through it. In my painting I did a lot of lines and sweeps on her face to show emotion."

The exhibit at the Museum of London is available for viewing until June 7.

WESS art students get work on display



SUBMITTED



You can be beautiful.

WESS student Jacquie Lawley's oil painting is at the Museum of London, along with the work of 120 other Thames Valley students selected for an exhibit.

Jacquie Lawley is one of five West Elgin Secondary School students whose art has been chosen to go on display at the Museum of London in the People in the Picture exhibit which is open until June 7.

When Jacquie was told her work was selected, she admits she didn't like the idea at first.

"I wasn't surprised at all, but I was kind of angry. I don't like my art being judged. My art teacher said she was going to submit it and I allowed that," said Jacquie. "But now I'm hearing how much people like it and now I'm kind of glad it got sent in."

It isn't always easy making the message in a work of art understood by others. This

is a concern for Jacquie. Her oil painting shows a person sitting in a coy pond. The person is no specific gender, and wears clothes that contrast dark and light colours.

"The real meaning is supposed to be, no matter who you are, you're still beautiful, no matter what. Anybody can be beautiful as they want to be," she said.

This marks only the 2nd painting on a canvas Jacquie has done. Mostly she does sketches. Art may have rubbed off on Jacquie from her grandmother, who does water colouring, and her uncle, who painted in acrylic.

"I've probably been drawing since I was three because I hated writing down words," she said.

AR 2/09



Slam Dunk!

West Elgin Wildcat Michael Godfrey flies over helper Will Smith for a dunk during the TVRAA South dunk competition March 12 at Central Elgin C.I.

The dunk competition was won by Andrew Jenkins of CECI. There was also a three-point shooting contest, won by Jason Schuler of EESS.

It all wrapped up with an all-star game with WESS, CECI, and EESS playing against AVSS, PCI, and SJHS.

SUN MEDIA PHOTO

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Rolling up his sleeve.

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Grade 13 student Kyle Kuska donated blood when Canadian Blood Services visited West Elgin Secondary School March 27. Phlebotomist Angela O'Brien administered the needle.

Local girls make children's book

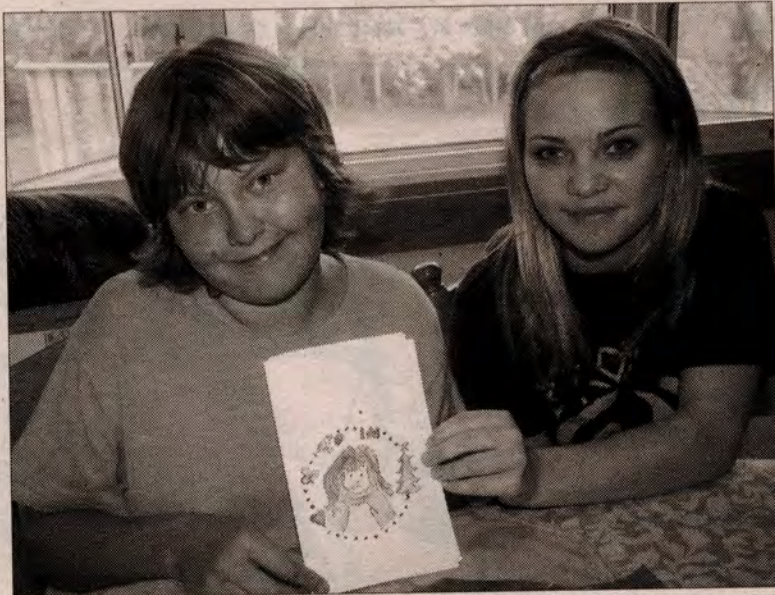
Head lice is an uncomfortable problem for many kids, so eleven-year-old Amy Cairns of Wardsville wrote a book to help them know it isn't the end of the world.

'The Curse of the Holiday Head Lice' has been written by Amy, with illustrations provided by Jenica Slaats, 15, of West Elgin Secondary School. Amy has come home from her school, Mosa Central in Glencoe, with notice letters about head lice many times, as many as eight times in one year. It's especially no fun to get head lice close to the holidays, but Amy reminds us in her book that 'Head lice don't take a holiday.'

The book has been in development off and on since Amy came up with the idea about four years ago.

"It feels great. I hope it actually makes a real difference in the world; that when kids have head lice, they can read it and they can know that head lice isn't the worst thing in the world... and not to panic," said Amy.

Amy was 7 years old when she first got the idea to write a kids book about head lice. While Amy and her mother were at the hospital for Amy's sister's hip surgery, they happened to meet David Carruthers, a London children's author, in the waiting room. About a year later, Amy's mother, Bridget, sent Carruthers an email



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

The Curse of the Holiday Head Lice

Eleven-year-old Amy Cairns (L), and 15-year-old Jenica Slaats have collaborated on a book for kids on dealing with head lice. Amy wrote the story and Jenica provided illustrations. The book was completed Nov. 27, and the two girls appeared at the West Lorne Library Dec. 19 to sign and promote the book.

about the story idea, and he responded with enthusiasm, giving some advice on steps to take to make the book a reality.

The Cairns contacted West Elgin Secondary School to ask the art department about student artists who might be able to provide illustrations for the book. Grade 9 student Jenica Slaats was recommended.

"I feel like it's a dream come true, or a once in a lifetime deal," said Jenica about the finished book. "It's really cool to see my drawings, just because

it's more official than drawing it on a piece of paper."

Carruthers put Amy Cairns in touch with the Middlesex Printing Corp. in London, and on Nov. 27, Amy and her mother went to London to pick up the completed copies of the book. On Nov. 19, Amy and Jenica appeared at the West Lorne Library for a book signing.

"My little acorn is becoming a mighty oak," said Bridget Cairns about her daughter. "Two young women taking a big problem 'head-on'." She said, with a pun on head lice.

The Curse of The Holiday Head Lice is available locally at Dave's Wardsville Café, the Wardsville Credit Union, and at the West Lorne and Rodney Libraries. The Cairns are currently talking with the superintendent of the Thames Valley District School Board concerning distribution through the schools.



WESS Sr. Girls volleyball win AA WOSSA title!

SUBMITTED

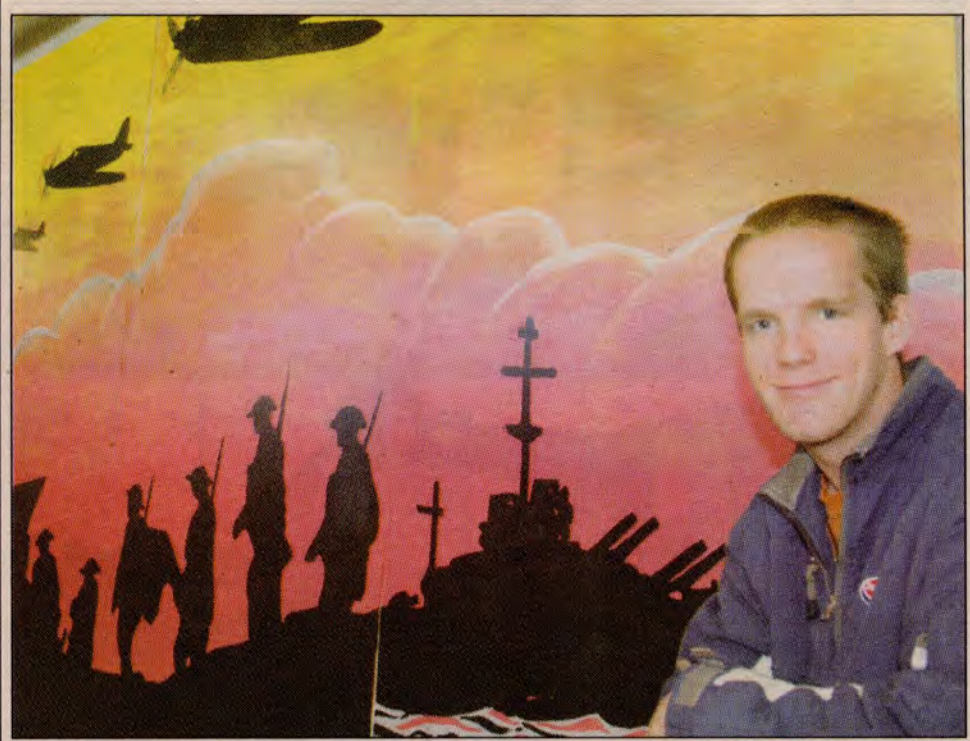
Read all about the team's great work this season on page 6! Front Row – Mrs. Gosnell (asst coach), Debbie Levesley, Madison Gosnell, Sarah King, Meghan Schneider, Emma Wilkins, Lindsay Laing, Elysia Peskar, Mr. Burke (coach). Back Row – Jessica Varga, Hilary Hodder, Rae Hale, Stephanie Leys, Melanie Ganhadeiro, Emily Varga, Andrew McWilliam (manager).



Floor hockey.

JEAN GUY ST. JACQUES/THE CHRONICLE

People gathered at the West Elgin Recreation Centre March 14 for a friendly game of floor hockey. The games are run by the St Thomas Elgin YMCA, in partnership with the Recreation centre, to promote participation among male youth from 13 years of age and up. The next game will be held on April 18 at 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome.



A tribute painting.

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Ryan Bedford of West Elgin Secondary School has finished three panels that go together as one painting showing Canadian forces on land, air and sea. It's planned for the mural to be installed at the West Elgin Arena.

War memorial mural

The first half of a war memorial mural, planned for the West Elgin Arena, is done.

Ryan Bedford, a 6th year West Elgin Secondary School Student has been working on the paintings for his co-op placement with the Legion. A plan has been in the works to get the West Elgin Arena a mural for about two years. In late March, Bedford finished the first three panels of a war memorial mural that will be put up on one of the arena's exterior walls. The panels together measure 8 feet by 12 feet and show a silhouette of soldiers, fighter planes and ships, representing Canadian forces on land, in the air and in the sea.

"I've been getting a lot of good compliments for it. I think it's one of the biggest and best paintings I've ever done," said Bedford. "I feel happy because one of the veterans from

the Legion came and said I did a really great job on it."

Bedford got some tips on what to paint from the Legion, but he also did extensive research on war memorials for inspiration. He's in the middle of planning what he will paint in the next three panels. Right now, he's thinking of painting images of a lone soldier, a lady in mourning, and falling maple leaves representing fallen Canadian Soldiers, as well as poppies and a grave.

"I'm going over the design of how it's going to be where everything is going to be put. I'm drawing it out," he said.

Recreation Superintendent Jeff Slater doesn't know yet when the paintings will be put up at the arena. Slater said that either this year or next year, insulation and siding work will be done on the arena walls.

DEC 17/09

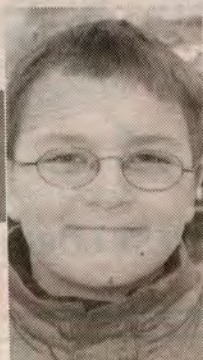
JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

WESS Talent show!

The West Elgin Secondary School Talent Show was held in the school gym Dec. 4. Cody MacKinnon got things started with some fiddling, both right side-up and upside-down. First place went to Sara Oliveira and her violin performance. Other acts included Teresa Nesic and her European Folk Dancing, Shaye Abel and her rap performance, dancers Breanne Carter, Laura Pinder and Steph Duarte, and many more.



Chronicle Kid!



Tyler Skedgel
Age: 9
School: Aldborough P.S.
Favourite tv show: Bakugan
Favourite activity: Playing video games
What you want to be: A Policeman

If you or someone you know would like to be a Chronicle Kid, just give us a call at 768-2220.

Chronicle Kid!



Morgan Lopes
Age: 9
School: St. Mary's
Favourite tv show: The suite Life on Deck
Favourite activity: Bike riding
What you want to be: A vet

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JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

WESS Jr.'s play

Central Elgin

Matt Howard took a shot during the WESS Jr. Boys Basketball game against the Central Elgin Titans Dec. 10. WESS lost 57-22. The Jr. Boys will be away to play Arthur Voaden Dec. 17.

The West Elgin Secondary School prom has a tentative date of June 6 and Graduation will be in October. WESS has formed the SafeGrad Committee to encourage students to make responsible choices when they celebrate.



Have a safe and fun graduation! JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE
This year's WESS graduation class is wearing white to promote safe planning for prom. In Canada, half of all substance abuse treatment involves alcohol. SafeGrad is an initiative across the TVDSB to encourage responsible choices.



SafeGrad Committee.
(Top) Emma Wilkins, Brodi Jewel, Shelby Willcocks. (Bottom) Michael Godfrey, Hilary Hodder, Lindsay Gowan. (Absent) Melanie Ganhadeiro, and Katyla Shine.

-Submitted
The Mission of the SafeGrad Committee is to "equip high school students with information, skills and community support to plan safer celebrations, not just graduation, but throughout the year." Our goal is to "reduce injuries due to alcohol and drug use for both the students and those who are affected by their choices."

It is necessary to acknowledge that a number of teens drink, often to excess and when intoxicated are more likely to engage in risky behaviour. Our approach is not to preach but to inform so that next time they are heading out for a night with friends they are well aware of the consequences of drinking, using drugs, and driving. Our graduation class is wearing white to ensure the safe planning for prom.

As teachers, parents and community members, we need to encourage proper planning and smarter choices to reduce injuries. For more information on how you can help contact: www.safegrad.com, www.osaid.org, or www.MADD.ca.

June graduation is an exciting time at West Elgin and a reason to celebrate success. As members of the community, we all have roles in the provision of safety for our students. From the school's perspective, we are doing our best to educate students about the need for responsible decision making. A special thanks need to be extended to our students and staff involved in making this a safe evening.

Our Safe Schools program has endorsed an initiative called Safe Grad across the TVDSB. Our school based dance will be monitored by staff and paid duty officers from the OPP. It is considered an alcohol-free event for all participants. As a staff, we will do our best to keep your children safe. As parents, please consider your children's safety and speak with them frankly about your concerns.

To our celebrants, congratulations and we look forward to seeing you at commencement in October.



Literacy is a wonderful thing! JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE
On Jan. 23, schools, libraries and other institutions across Canada made an attempt at a world record for most children read to at multiple locations. Participants at each location read five Robert Munsch books to a group of kids. At Aldborough Public School, Judy Whalls (top left), Shannon Huston (top right), Carrie Livingston (bottom left) and Trisha Pearson were just a few teachers who took turns reading to the kids.

Chronicle Kid!



Morgan Lopes
Age: 9
School: St. Mary's
Favourite tv show: The suite Life on Deck
Favourite activity: Bike riding
What you want to be: A vet

If you or someone you know would like to be a Chronicle Kid, just give us a call at 768-2220.

WESS Drama

As we prepare to share our production with the community, the actors feel the excitement and nervousness that accompanies opening night. Join us for the WEDS/W.E.S.S. Wildcats Drama production of *Trek Wars* at the WEDS Performing Arts Centre. It is now open and will run until April 25 at 8 p.m.

Krista McVicar - Actor

I love being the lawyer in the play. I played a similar part in a class play about 6 months ago. A character with the same attitude, likewise I enjoyed that part. This role is more interesting and fun than you would expect. I have my credits for drama, Grades Nine through Eleven. I would say that through my experience so far acting and life are alike. You have to learn to live in the moment. To enjoy and have fun every second. I know you have to do that for acting and life... well it goes smoother if you live in the moment. Being the lawyer and being involved in drama has brought me through a journey in life, one I will never forget.

Rebekah Brayton - Actor

Opening Night. Opening night draws near and so does the nervous anticipation. The thoughts; What if something goes wrong? What if someone messes up? What if I forget my lines? What if I freeze? I have been in enough plays to know, that however chaotic things may seem, however hectic and crazy rehearsals are things almost always pull together. I am looking forward to *Trek's*

opening night.

On the actual opening night, and every night of performing, I get butterflies in my stomach, my pulse races and I find myself eating an abnormally large amount of food. As the seconds tick by and I stand just out of sight of the audience time seems to slow and I become aware of everything around me; the little whispers of people getting ready to go onstage, the rustle of costumes and then...then I step out and it is always the same every single opening night. I step out into the stage light and I'm home. That's when I know everything is going to be great.

Christine Gruenbauer - Actor, Publicist

Opening night is always stressful, no matter what you are performing. I have been in multiple plays over the years and each experience has only made opening night a little easier. I'm not as nervous anymore, but I still worry about whether or not the audience will enjoy the play, or if they will laugh at the jokes. I do believe that anyone who sees this *Wildcats Drama/WESS* performance, *Trek Wars*, will laugh. The script, written completely by our director and members of the cast/crew, is full of word puns, jokes, and just plain funny characters that are guaranteed to make you giggle. I sincerely hope that you come out and see this wonderful theatrical performance and if you come out on opening night, clap a little louder, the performers will definitely appreciate it.

Chronicle Kid!



Josh Conway
Age: 10
School: St. Mary's
Favourite tv show: Supercross
Favourite activity: Dirt bike riding
What you want to be: A famous dirtbiker

If you or someone you know would like to be a Chronicle Kid, just give us a call at 768-2220.



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Life is a Highway

Road safety advocates Joe Edmonds (L) and Michael Ray performed at West Elgin Secondary School last week. Edmonds's son Jason died at age 23 in a vehicle crash, and Ray, who has been in four separate vehicle accidents in his life, currently deals with memory issues, auditory disorders, and headaches. As a result, the two have joined forces with their presentation called 'Life is a Highway.' The two talked to assembled students about their own experiences, and kept the crowd's attention with lively music. Vehicle crashes are a leading cause of permanent injury and death among North American youths, so Edmonds and Ray gave advice on driving safely.