

Taking the



Pulse

of Palliser Regional Schools

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



As May unfolds, Palliser continues to prepare students for year-end exams and, in particular, Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12 students who will participate in provincial achievement tests and diploma exams. Capitalizing on each student's academic potential is a priority, but we are also aware that the successful preparation of our students for life and its challenges is equally important, and it is in these areas that we are focusing this month's *Pulse*.

Opening doors for our female students with opportunities to job shadow successful career women in our community is fundamental to encouraging our student population to strive for excellence, perhaps outside the realm of what is expected. The participation and successes of Palliser students in the Skills Canada competition also broadens the horizons of our students and opens doors to possibilities for the future. Developing children of strong character is quickly becoming a cornerstone of Palliser's promise, and this month's edition highlights one successful character-building program in Picture Butte. This month's *Pulse* also provides a glimpse of the fledgling band program taking root in Coalhurst, Nobleford, Iron Springs and Picture Butte under the guidance of an itinerant band teacher.

The sky's the limit for Palliser students!

Kevin Gietz, Superintendent of Schools

PALLISER STUDENTS EXCEL AT SKILLS CANADA COMPETITION

Skills Canada's Mission : "Skills/Compétences Canada® is a national, not for profit organization that actively promotes careers in skilled trades and technologies to Canadian youth"

Since its inception in 1989, [Skills/Compétences Canada](#) has evolved into a pan-Canadian organization offering skilled trades and technology [competitions](#) at the regional, provincial/territorial, national and international levels, as well as other awareness programs for thousands of young Canadians. Skills/Compétences Canada is also a founding partner of the national awareness campaign, "[Skilled Trades: A Career You Can Build On](#)".

Over the next two decades, employers in Canada will find it difficult to hire and retain skilled workers. S/CC aims to help Canada's industries find well-trained, well-prepared young people to fill these positions, and they want youth to understand the many opportunities, benefits and rewards of skilled trade and technology careers. Improving the expertise and confidence of individuals pursuing technical careers will benefit us all.

Palliser 2009 SW Regional Skills Canada Winners

Discipline	Award	Student(s)	School
Automotives	Bronze	Casey West/Greg Vredegoor	Picture Butte High
Cabinetry	Gold	Corny Siemens	Noble Central
Carpentry	Gold	Mark Ott	PASS+ Outreach
Culinary	Silver	Isabella Scrigner	Kate Andrews High
Fashion Design	Gold	Layne Wilson	Kate Andrews High
TV/Video Production	Silver	Dillon McDonald/Jordan Davidson	County Central High

In September 2008, 38 young Canadians from across the country will be travelling to Calgary to participate in 35 contest areas and represent Canada at the 40th WorldSkills Competition. Visit the [WorldSkills](#) site to learn more about [Team Canada](#) and the WorldSkills competition.

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Inside this issue:

Superintendent's Message	1
Palliser Students Excel at Skills Canada Competition	1
And the Band Plays on At Coalhurst High School	2
Dorothy Dalgliesh A to Z Character Ed	2
Palliser Girls Discover Science Careers	2
Coming in June . . .	2

The Creative Team:

Co-Editors: Dan Ryder and Mary Ann Sorge

E-mail: pulse@pallisersd.ab.ca

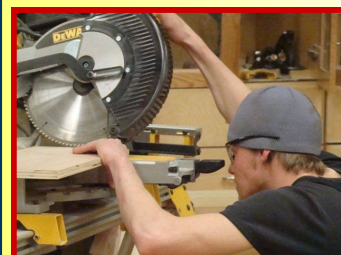
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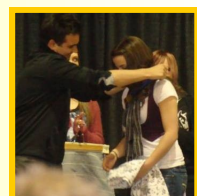
Mark Ott—PASS+



Greg Vredegoor & Casey West—Picture Butte High



Corny Siemens—Noble Central



Layne Wilson—Kate Andrews High

AND THE BAND PLAYS ON AT COALHURST HIGH SCHOOL

With a warm travel mug of coffee nestled in her hands Tanya Conrad reflected on the band program that she started from scratch to expand programming opportunities for students at six Palliser schools, including Coalhurst High School.

Eight months into the program, music is echoing down the hallways of Coalhurst High School, where I caught up to Tanya. "It's been a busy time and I'm learning a lot from the kids," Tanya said. "As the teacher, I think it's important for me to learn all the instruments and be able to model how to play them properly for students."



Teaching band is Tanya's passion, and it is evident in the students' enthusiasm and how well the program is doing. Noble Central, Huntsville, Dorothy Dalgliesh, Picture Butte High, Coalhurst Elementary and Coalhurst High Schools all benefit from Tanya's skilled approach to teaching music. "The biggest success this year has been starting these programs and watching the kids flourish as they grow and become more confident. It blows me away," Tanya emphasized.

Community support for the band program has been very positive and was evident at a fund-raising concert sponsored by Coalhurst High School Grades 7/8 band on May 6. Students organized the community concert, which also featured a bake sale and cake auction. Funds raised from this event will go towards the purchase of new instruments for the program.

For more information on the band program at Coalhurst High School or any of the other schools benefiting from the itinerant teaching efforts of Tanya Conrad, contact Tanya at tanya.conrad@pallisersd.ab.ca.

COMING IN JUNE . .

- Heritage Christian Academy and Master's Academy & College students extend support on mission trips to Costa Rica and Dominica
- Meet Rob Fath, the new OH&S Coordinator charged with implementation of Occupational Health & Safety Legislation in Palliser



DOROTHY DALGLIESH A TO Z CHARACTER ED

Jolaine Kunz and Jodi Gurr, two teachers at Dorothy Dalgliesh School, were invited to present at the Annual AISI Conference in Calgary in February 2009. The teaching duo uses a worksheet to get their A to Z initiatives in place and develop Grade 6 leaders. "They are leaders if they like the idea or not." The purpose of Character Education is to students plugged into leadership and to expand their leadership potential. These two teachers have worked hard to harness the Character Education backpacks, which are linked to Dorothy Dalgliesh School's word-of-the-month. Students take the backpacks home and go through activities at home that promote citizenship, family, cooperation and character-building. An example of the word-of-the-month would be 'perseverance.' This backpack contained games and activities to challenge students to develop perseverance in themselves.

The teachers stated, "We decorate doors that showcase people and character traits. An example of this is the focus on Eva Olson and her work to educate students about the Holocaust. She came to our school and presented to our students." "Take little steps," is advice offered by Jodi Gurr to teachers wishing to begin an initiative that hooks Grade 6 students into leadership in meaningful ways.

Jolaine and Jodi have worked hard to imbed the school's character education program into the entire school. "We have set up a families with children in all grades into teacher-led families. The teacher's name has to be in the family," said Jodi. It has created a much deeper sense of family where children look after each other and create a deeper sense of belonging in the school.

Success comes from including all stakeholders in the planning and activities. Children, parents and other staff members are a crucial part of the success of the Grade 6 leadership program at Dorothy Dalgliesh School. "Our Leadership has really grown," said Jolaine. "Students have taken ownership over the school and care about the activities that take place at Dorothy Dalgliesh School."

Lead teachers are creating student leaders who make a real difference in their school. Jolaine Kunz and Jodi Gurr are teachers who care about students, see the leadership potential in their Grade 6 students, and have set high standards for developing student leadership. For more information about Dorothy Dalgliesh School's Student Leadership Program, contact [Jolaine](#) or [Jodi](#) by e-mail or call Dorothy Dalgliesh School at (403) 732-5636.



PALLISER GIRLS DISCOVER SCIENCE CAREERS

Students from Picture Butte High, Coalhurst High, County Central High and Kate Andrews High Schools had the opportunity to learn about careers in science, math, engineering and technology. Because the numbers of females in these careers has traditionally been low, Operation Minerva was established in 1988 to introduce girls to these challenging and rewarding careers, and it has been doing this for over 15 years.

By job shadowing women in professions at the Helen Schuler Nature Centre, CTV, Bayer Corp Science, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Lethbridge Research Centre, girls from Palliser schools were able to see new employment opportunities they not have considered previously.

Giving our girls the widest choice possible, including jobs in science, strengthens Palliser schools, communities and families. Check out the [Operation Minerva](#) website for more information on this organization, which is broadening career options available to Palliser students.

