



Pulse

of Palliser Regional Schools

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

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May is always a busy one in the Palliser family. Students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 face another round of Provincial Achievement Tests, high schools gear up for graduation ceremonies, and the Victoria Day

weekend arrives as the unofficial start to summer.

The pace may be hectic, but hopefully, there's time for inspiration along the way.

This month's Pulse certainly offers a number of inspiring stories, from a long-time educator and coach receiving a provincial award and following in the footsteps of his father; to a pair of middle school pals who entered a

science competition with no great expectations and wound up winning a lifetime ; to a running club of hundreds of children who are now getting their families caught up in the pursuit of physical health. Finally, the words of an instructor of one of our videoconference courses about her love of small, rural schools are sure to strike a chord in Palliser where so many of our schools are small in size, but increasingly great in community spirit and opportunity.

Take some time to reflect on the potential and possibilities awaiting our students as they continue to learn and grow. There's just no telling where their dreams might lead, but we do know that as part of the Palliser team, we can help those dreams along through our continued emphasis on excellence in

Provincial recognition a family affair

High on the wall in his office, Terry Hanna keeps the plaque his father George received from the Alberta Schools' Athletics Association for a life of service to athletics.

In an office full of newspaper clippings, team photos and certificates, the plaque stands out. It's held a special place for Terry ever since George passed away in the early 1990s.

This month, Terry will have to make room on the wall for a plaque of his own, as he accepts this year's Robert H. Routledge Award, in recognition of outstanding service to the students of Alberta schools in the promotion and operation of an athletic program. The award will be presented in Edmonton on May 14th.

For the long-time coach and teacher at Kate Andrews High School in Coaldale, the acceptance speech will be test of composure as he contemplates a moment uniting him with a father who's been gone nearly two decades.

This is the first time in ASAA history the award has gone to a father and son.

"It's overwhelming, it really is," Terry says, as he thinks about the long line of past winners. "These are people I've known since I was a kid. It holds a great deal of meaning. It's really, really



Terry Hanna holds the Routledge Award his father won in 1988.

special because of my dad."

Principal Danny Roberts says he appreciates just how much of a resource Terry is to the school and the region.

"People have the highest regard for Terry," Roberts says. "He's a class act. . . As a coach, a builder, an administrator and as an athlete, he has done it all."

Terry isn't just following his father's footsteps in sports. He's also a second generation devotee to Palliser. George spent his entire teaching career at County of Lethbridge schools, now part of Palliser. After retiring, he served on the board of

education. When George passed away, Terry's mother, Rosalie, ran for election. She was chairwoman when Palliser was created.

Terry's career has been spent almost exclusively at Palliser's Coaldale schools.

Athletics, he says, "is an integral part of not just the school, but of the community." Through school sports, students learn the value of hard work, discipline and team work, bankable skills for the rest of their lives.

His three children share the coaching bug, but only one, Nicole, followed Terry into teaching. She's been on the Palliser sub list, making her a third generation in the Hanna-Palliser connection.

Congratulations, Marvin

This month's Unsung Hero award goes to Menno Simons' Physical Education and Math teacher Marvin Grasmeyer.

Principal Byron Thiessen describes Marvin as "our



Marvin Grasmeyer

backbone at Menno Simons." "He coaches both our junior and senior girls basketball teams, does a great deal of work behind the scenes, organized the Christmas program set up and clean up, and organizes several sports tournaments," Byron says. "He operates all the sound for every assembly, chapel or show and was our league's volleyball commissioner."

With students looking on and cheering, Byron said students were likely unaware of just how much Marvin contributes to the activities and atmosphere of the school.

Marvin has taught at Menno Simons in Calgary for 15 years, nearly his entire teaching career.

"I enjoy it immensely," he says. "I have four children going to the school. I love the community here."

As this month's Unsung Hero, Marvin received a Palliser travel mug and a gift certificate to Moxie's.

To nominate a Palliser Unsung Hero, email pulse@pallisersd.ab.ca with the name of your nominee and why they deserve recognition.

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Young scientists headed to nationals

Two Grade 7 students from R.I. Baker Middle School are about to embark on an adventure of a lifetime, competing in the Canada Wide Science Fair in Peterborough, Ont. May 15-23.

Kaylee Kapitany and Alison Lee won the opportunity at the regional fair in Lethbridge last month. Their experiment, "Foiled Again," set out to demonstrate whether reflectors at the base of a plant could increase growth.

"I'm really excited," they say, in unison. "All of our effort and time has so paid off," Alison says.

The pair will be flying to Toronto and staying in the dormitories at Trent University. In addition to competing, they will be taking in activities like visiting a reptile house and a wolf exhibit at the university, taking in a "CSI"-style forensics camp, touring the Ontario Science Centre, enjoying a barbecue at the Toronto Zoo and maybe fitting in a little shopping in Canada's largest city.

"The memories are going to be amazing," Kaylee says.

Alison and Kaylee were inspired to enter the fair by science teacher Mike Davis, who offered a weekly after-school session for any students interested in working on a project.



Alison Lee, left, and Kaylee Kapitany hold their science medals.

"We started thinking out ideas for how we could grow a plant bigger and stronger or better," Alison says.

Their tomato plants with strips of aluminum foil wrapped around the base grew 16.3 centimetres, compared to 12.3 cm for the plants without the foil.

With no expectations of winning, Kaylee and Alison earned two gold medals and a bronze, \$115 each in prize money and a trip to the nationals.

When they called their parents with the news, both girls say their parents thought it was a prank.

The surprises didn't end there. Davis and the girls say they were amazed to learn of the long list of regulations for competing nationally. The team can't travel with their plants so they're documenting their work in photographs. Their cardboard trifold display had to be redone with wood. The display had to be jazzed up with colour.

With help from their teacher and the school's expert builder Jesse Sadlowski, the new display is ready to roll.

Davis is hoping Kaylee and Alison will inspire other Palliser students to enter the science fair.

GCA on the run

The Glenmore Christian Academy Running Club was quick off the blocks and shows no sign of slowing.

Andrea Taylor, who came up with the idea for the club with fellow parent Tasha Schindel, says they initially hoped 40 students would rise to the challenge of daily physical activity. Instead, nearly 150 students joined last year, and this year, that number is up around 200.

The students from Grades 1 to 9 commit to running or walking one kilometre a day for 40 days leading up to the May 30th Calgary Marathon. At the marathon, they'll run the last 1.2 km to complete the 41-km marathon. This marathon is limited to children 12 and younger. Many older students at GCA have chosen to run longer distances at the event.

Taylor, who's not a runner, says the club has been a hit not only with students, but with families. She and her children, for example, have committed to the 5K event this year.

The students got a boost April 14th when "Marathon Man" Martin Parnell visited GCA, running the equivalent of a marathon around the school grounds and in the gym. The Cochran man talked to students about the value of running and other aspects of physical health. His visit was captured on Calgary's Breakfast Television.

Principal Rob Cowie says the club has been great for school spirit and encouraging "lifelong learning, and an understanding that remaining physically active is a lifelong pursuit."

The club is the largest participating group in the Kids Marathon.

VCing is believing

Videoconferencing continues to expand in Palliser, bringing together students and staff separated by distance.

This semester students in Brant are taking Cosmetology 10, Math 20 Pure and Chemistry 30, while students at Heritage Christian Academy in Calgary are accessing Math 31.

The technology has worked almost without fail all semester, says Katherine Pritchard, who teaches Math 31 from Kate Andrews in Coaldale.

"The teaching is the same," she says. "It's just a matter of getting the cameras set up."

For one day in April, Pritchard taught from Heritage, meeting students Chris Yee and Quentin Visser, face-to-face, and allowing her 21 students at KAHS to see what it's like to be on the other end of VCing.

For Yee, who plans to continue a post-secondary education in engineering, taking Math 31 was a necessity. Without VC, he faced the prospect of learning calculus by distance learning. "At least this way you have someone to talk to," he says. "With a



Katherine Pritchard teaches at Heritage Christian while her students at KAHS are shown on the screen to the left.

teacher, you're more motivated."

Also in April, eight students in Brant taking Math and Chemistry by VC visited Calgary Christian to meet their VC classmates and teacher in person.

Stephanie Anderson, who supervises Brant's VC lineup with help from learning assistant Randene St. Amour, says VCing has been a big success.

For the first time, Palliser has a CTS course offered by VC. Six students at Brant are learning about hair care, styling and

makeup from an instructor in the private sector — Heidi Bogi, from Lethbridge's Purely Inspired Academy of Beauty.

While Bogi brings knowledge of the subject matter, Anderson brings the educators' eye. Together they ensure students are doing the work and meeting course objectives.

Bogi, herself a product of a small southern Alberta school, says she sees tremendous potential in videoconferencing, not only for hairstyling, but for other trades as well.

Both Bogi and her cousin, Kelsey Yule, Purely Inspired's owner and creator of the VC course, grew up in the Cessford area, north of Brooks, and attended a tiny school.

After graduation Bogi enrolled in a beauty academy in downtown Vancouver, where the majority of students had taken some cosmetology training in high school.

"I had never even held scissors before."

She says she loved her small school which had great teachers and provided individual attention. There, she learned business skills of self-motivation and approachability.

"I don't want any of these (rural) students to have to feel like they have to move to an urban city school for opportunity."