

# CELEBRATION ITEMS

## French Immersion at White City School

# LEARNING A LANGUAGE ... AND LOVING IT



Students in the Grade 1/2 French Immersion class at White City School participate a classroom activity while their teacher, Giselle Chomos, looks on. For more on the new French Immersion program at White City School, turn to Page 5.

*‘STUDENTS ARE ENTHUSED,  
THEY ARE ENGAGED,  
AND THEY ARE ON TASK.’*

-- Principal Bev Bjornson-Kowalchuk

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## Governor General visits Lajord Colony

The Lajord Colony had the honour of hosting a visit by Their Excellencies the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, and Mrs. Sharon Johnston on September 12, 2011.

Their Excellencies started their tour of the Colony with a visit to the Lajord Colony School where they were introduced to the students, teachers and Prairie Valley School Division officials. The students had an opportunity to talk to the Governor General about their school and

ask him questions about his position. They also performed a song in his honour.

Their Excellencies then toured the colony in order to experience their way of life, and learn about their agricultural and business operations.

The visit to the Lajord Colony was one of many stops on the Governor General's first official visit to Saskatchewan, held from September 11 to 13, 2011. Their Excellencies also took part in activities in Gravelbourg, Regina, and Saskatoon.



Governor General David Johnston greets a student (top photo), meets Prairie Valley Trustee Lee Elliott (middle right), poses with Lajord Colony School students (bottom left) and talks to Colony members after the school visit (bottom right).



Balcarres Community School students with their Tomatosphere Project plants.

# TOMATOES FROM SPACE

## Balcarres students participate in unique science project

As I returned to Balcarres Community School this September to begin a new year of teaching, I was eager to touch base with some of my students from last year to find out if their tomato plants grew as well as mine did over the summer. What makes these tomatoes special is that they were grown by my students as part of the Tomatosphere Project, a project sponsored by the Canadian Space Agency that involves germinating seeds that had previously been aboard the International Space Station.

The variety of space-related projects we were involved in last year really got the students enthusiastic about learning about space exploration and the impact it has on our everyday lives. It also gave them a chance to experience what it is like being junior scientists performing experiments that could one day help support a human colony on another planet, such as Mars.

The Tomatosphere Project was one of several exciting activities that 70 Grade 2 to 6 students were involved with during the last school year.

The students were treated to the opportunity to chat live with Canadian astronaut Colonel Chris Hadfield via Skype.

I attended a conference at the Canadian Space Agency the previous summer and was able to register for this rare opportunity to interview Col. Hadfield, who will become the first Canadian astronaut to command the International Space Station on his next mission in 2012. The students were able to ask Col. Hadfield a number of personal and space related questions about his training, dreams and life on the ISS.

If that wasn't enough of a thrill, the same group of students were treated to a visit with a Canadian Space Agency ambassador from the University of Alberta about a month after the Skype session. This involved group workshops on the anatomy of robots during which the students learned about the components necessary to build a robot. The students then had to work together to design a robot that would either clean up space debris or water plants on Mars.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the activity and came up with some awesome plans. Perhaps the space agency will adopt some of our creations.

- Submitted by Lorelei Kotylak, Grade 3 teacher, Balcarres Community School



## Chameleons help make school more inviting

Denwold School staff and students are working together to become better readers. They also want the school to look interesting and inviting.

On September 15, 2011, everyone worked together to create an Eric Carle bulletin board.

First of all, Mrs. Switzer read the book, *The Mixed Up Chameleon*, by Eric Carle, to the entire student body. Then “big buddies” helped “little buddies” cut out and decorate their own mixed up chameleons. While students worked on their creations, teachers prepared the background for the

chameleons.

The next week, students wrote about their chameleons. We are all very proud of our bulletin board and our first group art project!

Stay tuned to see what we do next month.

### ATHLETICS

## Wilson third in mini marathon

A student from Greenall High School was among the winners at the Queen City Marathon held on September 11, 2011.

Aurilla Wilson finished third in the girls division of the three-kilometre mini-marathon, for runners aged 11 to 17.

Wilson completed the mini-marathon in a time of 11:36.

## Scott wins silver medal at provincial golf tourney

Ricky-Lee Scott took home the silver medal at the provincial senior girls golf championship held on September 24 and 25, 2011 at the Kenosee Lake golf course.

The Grade 12 student from Whitewood School shot a two round total of 174 to tie for first place before losing in a playoff to Lisa Reid of Riffell High School.

Scott, and her Whitewood teammates Gabrielle Brule (Grade 11) and Jasmine Cook



**Ricky-Lee Scott, Gabrielle Brule and Jasmine Cook**

(Grade 12), finished third in the team competition, shooting a combined total of 387.

The team had previously placed first in the District Golf championship at Kenosee.

The Greenall High School senior boys golf team also competed in the provincial championships, finishing sev-

enth. Greenall had previously won the district title at the Kenosee course.

Team members are Evan Lang and Braden Arguin (both in Grade 12) and Lucas Sabit and Chace Kozack (both in Grade 11). Lang also recorded the low score at districts and was the overall district boys' champion.

# French Immersion well-received

As Grade 1/2 teacher Giselle Chomos looks over at her students' journals, she provides them with direction on what she would like them to do next. Without hesitation, the students get up from their desks and head off to participate in the activities she has just explained.

All of this takes place in French, a language the 26 students in her split class have only been exposed to for a few weeks. Her students, and those of kindergarten teacher Häla Magnuson are part of the first year of the new French Immersion program at White City School.

And although it is new, things have been going smoothly, creating an enjoyable experience for both students and staff.

"I am enjoying teaching the French Immersion program," says Chomos. "I anticipate a successful year with many bilingual students."

White City School Vice-Principal Rene Pelletier is also excited about the initial success of the new program.

"They are picking up the vocabulary very quickly," he says. "We are very impressed. When you are in the class, you notice they are engaged in the language."

Chomos says her students have adapted well as she concentrates on routine and repetition of French vocabulary.

"They are learning quickly due to structure and constant use of the language," she says. "There is never a single minute wasted. The students are always learning through songs, stories, animation, dance ..."

Magnuson explains much the same thing has happened in her kindergarten class.

"They are having so much fun and they are doing very well," she says, adding that young children pick up new languages very quickly. "To them it is language. It's not French. It's not English. It's just language."

While French is new to the students, it is also new to their parents, but Magnuson says they don't have to know French to be supportive of what their children are learning.

"Everything that is going home is something that they can be successful at on their own," she says. "Just listen to them reading to you. They want to show you what they've learned. And don't stop reading to them in English. Keep reading – those are all things they will use later."

She adds there are also excellent web-based resources available for parents. As well, organizations such as Canadian Parents for French are able to guide parents who are looking for more information about helping their children.



Students in the kindergarten and Grade 1/2 French Immersion classes at White City School.





Interested residents view a display featuring plans for the new elementary school for White City.

## A full house at open house

White City School was a very busy place on September 21, 2011, with 500 interested parents and community members attending the school's *Welcome Back BBQ and Open House*.

Hosted by the White City School Community Council, this annual event proved to be a successful and engaging evening.

Along with providing families with the opportunity to visit with one another, the event also

featured information about the proposed new elementary school. Senior administration officials from Prairie Valley and Stantec Architecture were on hand to discuss and answer questions about plans for the new school.

Families were also able to learn more about the new French Immersion program and visited their children's classrooms, became acquainted with classroom routines and procedures, and had a chance to have discussions with teachers.



## Greenall High School students attend ceremony featuring Governor General

Three students at Greenall High School had the pleasure of attending a unique ceremony at the Legislative Assembly on September 12, 2011. The students, along with teacher Joanne Beech, travelled to the Legislative Buildings for a Meet and Greet Event with the Governor General of Canada, His Excellency David Johnston.

The students were able to observe the Governor General's Inspection of the Troops, the 21 Gun salute, a Fly Pass of Military Jets, and the laying of a wreath at the War Memorial.

The Governor General also spoke to students in attendance from Regina and area during the ceremonies.