

# A passion for math *Contest encourages enthusiasm for numbers*

BY SARAH ELIZABETH BROWN  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

They perform rap music, they lead student councils. They're also shockingly good at wrestling numbers and puzzles into correct answers.

Almost 170 high school students wore out erasers and pulled hair Thursday at Lakehead for the seventh annual math contest held at the university.

Of those, 125 were from Thunder Bay high schools. The other 42 wrote their tests in Geraldton, Terrace Bay and Wawa.

In the morning, students wrote individual test papers. After lunch, trios crunched numbers for the group test while math department professors madly marked the morning exams in time for the awards ceremony in the afternoon. The schools will receive the results from the group test today.

Of the 14 students called forward as the day's top mathematicians — seven from the junior category and seven from the seniors — nine were from Sir Winston Churchill high school, including the winners in each age group.

Some of the number wizards wore maroon and grey school jackets, possibly borrowed from the football program.

Yuhan Chen won for the senior



THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL/SANDI KRASOWSKI

Lakehead University mathematics faculty mark test papers after the Northwestern Ontario School Mathematics Competition which features 42 students from the region.

category while Karthik Natarjan was the top junior.

Chen is school president, and both he and Natarjan, along with a fourth-place student, performed a rap song at a recent school assembly, said math teacher Andrea

Lamp. They're keen young mathematicians, but they are well-rounded young people, she said.

But keen they are. Each week, senior students meet on their own time to do math.

"At that level, they talk math, they do math," said Lamp. "They take a question and pull it apart."

Chen and Natarjan aren't the only numerical jocks at Churchill — among the younger set there's a Grade 7 student in the elementary

program who has finished the Grade 9 math curriculum and is working on Grade 10 math. The student who placed fourth in the junior category at Lakehead on Thursday is a ninth-grader working through math a grade level above.

Lamp noted some students "follow me around — they want to do math."

Maintaining that enthusiasm is the whole point of the contest, said mathematics professor Razvan Anisca, chair of the annual event's organizing committee.

"Every year, this contest comes and goes," Anisca told the students before announcing the winners. "What is important is that your mathematical interest survives."

Organizers are doing something right — seven years ago when the contest began, 70 kids sharpened their pencils. Participation has more than doubled since then.

The exam questions are taken from the high school curriculum, but they're more difficult than you'd usually find in a regular classroom, Anisca said. The group test is a step higher still, as students can discuss the problems.

Of the Grade 12 students who competed Thursday, the highest-placing student who goes on to Lakehead next year will get \$500 toward tuition.

## Dance will help quake victims

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Plans are coming together among Thunder Bay's Italian groups aiming to raise money for those affected in the earthquake that devastated the Abruzzo region of Italy on April 6.

Each of the approximately 20 Italian community groups will undertake fundraising efforts on their own for the larger collection, said John Potesio, spokesman for the Thunder Bay-Abruzzo Earthquake Relief Fund.

The committee organizing the relief fund, made up of representatives from those various community groups, is also organizing a boogie, or shag, for June 5 at the CLE Coliseum.

Tickets will be available at the door, and from members of any of the Italian clubs.

Already collected is a \$5,000 donation from the Italian Society of Port Arthur, and \$500 from the Ladies of the Principe di Piemonte. Collections last week at two Italian Catholic churches brought in a bit more than \$1,500.

The fundraising drive will wrap up by the end of June, Potesio said.

Soon requests for donations will be arriving in mailboxes of businesses and professionals in the city, particularly those from the Italian community.

Those who want to contribute can drop off cheques, made payable to Thunder Bay-Abruzzo Earthquake Relief Fund, at the Da Vinci Centre on S. Waterloo Street or the Italian Cultural Centre on S. Algoma Street.

## Manitouwadge welcomes MasoniChIP

BY KARINA HUNTER  
SPECIAL TO  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

A weekend event in Manitouwadge provided parents with a precautionary tool to safeguard their children.

The Algoma District Masonic Association, with the help of the Township of Manitouwadge, the volunteer fire department, and Manitouwadge's Family Place/Best Start Hub conducted their MasoniChIP identification kit program at the Manitouwadge Recreation Centre last weekend.

The event made the community the first on the North Shore to host the program since its official launch in Thunder Bay in January.

The MasoniChIP program creates an identification kit children that includes photos, video, voice recordings, digital fingerprints, dental impressions, saliva swabs and basic description data, such as height and eye colour. This information is matched to work seamlessly with law enforcement agencies. The information enables quicker response to cases of missing children.

Volunteers were welcomed by program co-ordinator Patrick Curran on Friday evening. He briefed them on the key points of the program before they began their training on the identification machines. All volunteers underwent a criminal record background check, generously provided free of charge by the Ontario Provincial Police, before becoming involved in the program. Curran reiterated numerous times



KARINA HUNTER

Volunteer Kelly Sagle guides Brooke Sagle through an audio-video interview during the MasoniChIP identification program at the Manitouwadge Recreation Centre.

(Ontario) Masons keep nothing on file, with the exception of the permission form signed by the parent/guardian, prior to participation in the event." The trainees were even provided with specific instruction regarding the disposal of any erroneous CDs or forms; these would be torn or, in the case of CDs, snapped in half and given to the parents to dispose of at home.

On Saturday, parents and care-

givers of 122 children and 12 seniors received printed EZ Child ID forms, a CD containing their loved ones personal information, digital fingerprints, digital photographs and a short audio/video interview as well as dental impressions and a DNA swab. The kits are provided to families free of charge so the Masons were grateful for the funds donated (approximately \$350) by those who visited the Manitouwadge ID Clinic

as these funds go directly towards the purchase or maintenance of ID Machines & Kits and are integral in continuing to bring the service to our communities.

According to statistics released by Canada's "Our Missing Children" site and Ontario Child Find, nearly 20,000 children are reported missing every year in Ontario. The key to recovering these children is quick action by parents and law enforcement and these MasoniChIP Identification kits are an integral part of that.

So why is Manitouwadge the first community to have this vital service made available to its residents? Curran credited Karen Robinson, Economic Development Assistant for the Township of Manitouwadge, as being the contact who, after many weeks of diligence rallying volunteers and coordinating the efforts of all parties involved, made it possible for the Masons to offer their services to the community.

"We hope that the other Northshore communities will follow Manitouwadge's lead," said Curran.

When asked why she had been so adamant in wanting to bring the service to Manitouwadge, Robinson said "This program helps protect those people who our community holds most dear, our children and seniors and I believe the peace of mind that accompanies it benefits everyone, therefore improving the quality of life in Manitouwadge."

For information, or to donate to the MasoniChIP Identification Program, visit [www.algomadistrict.ca](http://www.algomadistrict.ca) or [www.masonichip.ca](http://www.masonichip.ca)

Primetime TV 4/24/09						
	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30
CHFD IND	Ghost Whisperer A ghost wreaks havoc on the set of a soap opera. (N) ◊		Flashpoint A bank employee tries to ransom his captive wife. (N) ◊		Spectacle: Elvis Costello With... James Taylor performs. (N) ◊	
CICA IND	The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Heartbeat "Love Story" ◊		Allan Gregg in Conversation	Film 101 "Under Capricorn"
CKPR CBC	CBC Winnipeg Comedy Fest	Halifax Comedy Fest	CBC News: the fifth estate (N) ◊		CBC News: The National (N) ◊	
KARE NBC	Howie D's Concert for Life	Howie Do It ◊	Dateline NBC Authorities try to determine who shot a lawyer and his wife. (N) ◊			
WCCO CBS	Ghost Whisperer A ghost wreaks havoc on the set of a soap opera. (N) ◊		Flashpoint A bank employee tries to ransom his captive wife. (N) ◊		NUMB3RS "The Fifth Man" (N) ◊	
WTVPBS	Washington Week (N) ◊	Am I Right or am I Right	Slaphappy the Movie Show-cases of silent film's funniest moments includes clips from the "Slaphappy." ◊		Auction	
WUHF FOX	Prison Break "Vs" (N) ◊		Dollhouse Echo is imprinted with a murdered woman's memories. (N)		Fox First at Ten (N)	Sports Extra
WXYZ ABC	Wife Swap "Brazenwood/Taylor" (N) ◊		20/20 A woman suspected of murdering her two husbands. (N) ◊			

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