

## Regional Envirothon Champions Compete at Provincials By Michael Pineau

From May 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, a five member team from Mattawa represented F.J. McElligott in the Provincial Envirothon Competition near Brantford, Ontario. The team comprised of Riley Clarke, Jessica Groulx, Brittany Whalley, Rachelle Wilson, and Michael Pineau qualified for the event after dominating the regional competition at the Canadian Ecology Centre near Mattawa in late April. The team was lead to the regional victory by dedicated science teacher, Ms. Martha Mayfield, winning awards in wildlife, soils, forestry, and the oral debate on the impact of recreational activities on the natural environment. They also cheered themselves to a second place showing in the area of Team Spirit.

“Our team achieved an almost clean sweep of the regional competition, and in the process defeated seven teams representing several North Bay high schools,” said Ms. Mayfield. “We are grateful to our team’s sponsors - the Canadian Institute of Forestry’s Algonquin Section and The Forestry Research Partnership. All of our students were able to participate without having to pay any fees.”

The provincial competition was also generously funded by Tim Horton’s; and the F.J. team was given the honor of riding all the way to Brantford in a luxury Tim Horton’s coach bus. All lodging and food was provided free to all of the teams by the Tim Horton’s Children’s Foundation. Upon arrival at the Onondaga Farms - Tim Horton’s Camp, the team participated in various activities and events that acquainted them with the 22 other participating teams from all over Ontario. The four days consisted of several workshops focusing on different components of the environment in southern Ontario, tree and perennial planting for the Pinehurst Conservation Area Legacy Project, a rigorous day of testing, and an awards presentation the final day. The F.J. Team (The Flannel Plaids) did well, but did not place amongst the top three teams. The winning team, West Hill Secondary School from Owen Sound, will head to Arizona for the International competition in July.

“I am very proud of how our F.J. Envirothon Team represented Mattawa,” said Ms. Mayfield. “The students returned with much new knowledge and understanding of environmental science and ecology, as well as a lot of great memories.”



Participants (clockwise): Riley Clarke (with paddle), Jessica-Lynn Groulx, Martha Mayfield (teacher), Michael Pineau, Rachelle Wilson, Brittany Whalley (far right).

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