

Speaking of Success ...

Thirty-five competitors – 14 public speakers, and 21 presenters – arrived at Northlands on April 2 for the 2011 Alberta 4-H Provincial Communications competition. Every delegate came equipped with their collection of props, costumes, recipe cards and poster board, with the one universal item that each of them carried being their “A-Game.”

“At this level of competition, the members’ caliber of performance is through the roof. Naming a winner is never an easy process; it really just comes down to critiquing finicky nuances,” commented Cameron Horner, Communications and Marketing Specialist with Alberta 4-H and coordinator of the Provincial Communications competition. *“Each and every member here has the potential to take home the top place; it’s just a matter of on that day, at that particular time, who delivers the best under pressure.”*



At the provincial level, Presentations must run between eight to 10 minutes and can be done solo, or in a team of up to three people; following, judges or members of the audience ask up to three questions of the presenter(s). Thirteen demonstrations and illustrated talks, which ran the gamut from tie-dying and meal prepping to duck hunting and buying a proper horse, took

to the stage at this year's competition. Michelle Schuurman of the Lacombe 4-H Dairy Club took second place with her illustrated talk, "Gone but Not Forgotten." Leslieville Trail Trotters 4-H Club members Jessica Perreault and Katelyn Godwin's "Deal or No Deal" presentation earned the ladies a first place finish.

"Teamwork is very important to us because it is what got us this far," Katelyn reflected. "We knew how to have a ton of fun but also how to buckle down and get practicing when it came time to win." Jessica agreed, adding, "We are honoured to receive this provincial title; we feel that the skills learned in this 4-H communication project will take us very far in life."



Occurring simultaneously to the presentations, the public speaking side of the competition is measured in two parts: prepared and impromptu. Competitors are assigned a broad topic, this year's was "Youth and Tomorrow," which speakers use as a base to guide their new four to six-



minute speech. Impromptus have the members selecting a never-before-seen topic, and delivering a two to three-minute talk on something they had a minute to gather their thoughts on. Following more than two hours of talking by 14 competitors, Jillayne Stalwell of the Strathmore 4-H Multi Club won an Honourable Mention for her speech, “Full Speed Ahead” and Lindsay Skelton of the Okotoks Outriders 4-H Club took second with her talk, “A Flawless Figure.”

Zane Perreault earned a first-place finish with his prepared speech, “Diamonds of Hope” and his impromptu talk on global warming. As the winner of the 2011 provincial public speaking competition, Zane will represent Alberta next November at the Canadian Young Speakers for Agriculture (CYSA) competition in Toronto.

“I really wanted to win, not only because it’s a great accomplishment, but because it’s really important for youth to have a voice, and be heard,” said the Leslieville Trail Trotters 4-H Club member. “All of the hard work and determination that it required to get here really paid off.”



Showcasing the best of Alberta 4-H’s orators, Provincial Communications invites the top two public speakers and presenters from each of 4-H’s seven regions’ competitions to come and compete for the opportunity to be named the province’s best communicator. Presenting Partner for the Provincial Communications was AltaLink; Partner Supporters were Agrium, Calgary Stampede and the Government of Alberta. Partner Host was Edmonton Northlands.