

Media Release

Kaikohe. Tuesday, 16 September 2008



Budding scientists again show promise

The future of science and technology in New Zealand looks to be in good hands, if the breadth of talent exhibited at last week's Top Energy Far North Science & Technology Fair is anything to go by.

The Fair prize giving evening was held last Saturday, at The Centre in Kerikeri. Open to year 7 through 13 students and covering any area of science and technology, this year's Fair again produced a high standard of exhibits according to Fair Convener, Glenys Ross.

The Overall Senior Excellence Prize was won by Lauren Wing of Kerikeri High School. Lauren investigated the effect of temperature on the feeding of Monarch butterfly caterpillars. Her work could be applied to the captive breeding of butterflies. Lauren will be nominated for a place at 'Realise the Dream', the national science & technology event, under the control of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

The Overall Junior Excellence Prize was jointly won by Riley Phillips-Harris and James Richardson. During the floods of this winter the bridge providing access to Riley's home was washed out. His exhibit centred on an investigation of whether attachments to a bridge could alter the turbulence of the water and so avoid a recurrence of this situation.

James Richardson's project, 'Toxic Totara' investigated the effect of chemicals released by the Totara on the growth of other neighbouring plants. His experiments showed that there is in fact, an inhibitory effect.

Roger de Bray, Top Energy Chief Executive, was on hand to make the presentations for the Overall Excellence Awards. Top Energy has sponsored the Far North Science & Technology Fair for the last 5 years. de Bray believes the Fair is an effective learning programme that fits well with other educational initiatives his company sponsors in the Far North; WaterSafe - which teaches primary school children to swim and be safe around water; and Enterprise 4 Education (E4E) - Working in partnership with Far North school students, teachers and the business community, the E4E programme is designed to develop an enterprise culture in schools. Its focus is to deliver the whole curriculum in a way where students can see the relevance of their learning – and to help them develop into enterprising people. An important activity under the E4E umbrella is the setting up of Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) companies. YES companies are a learning experience in which students form companies,

become directors, and develop products and services which they market and sell. YES teaches skills in budgeting planning, interpersonal relations, decision making, reporting, communications, risk management and teamwork.

“The Fair is an excellent way to promote science and technology to our young people and at the same time help them develop problem-solving life skills. And judging by the standard again this year I think many of these young people could go on and make their mark in a science or technology career, if they so choose”, de Bray said. END.

Contact: Top Energy Chief Executive, Roger de Bray. Ph: 09 401 5622.

Pics: Lauren wing of Kerikeri High school with her winning exhibit. Riley Phillips-Harris with his 'Fin Bridges' exhibit.