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# YOUNG ISLAND SCIENTIST

Newsletter of the  
Society for the Advancement of Young Scientists

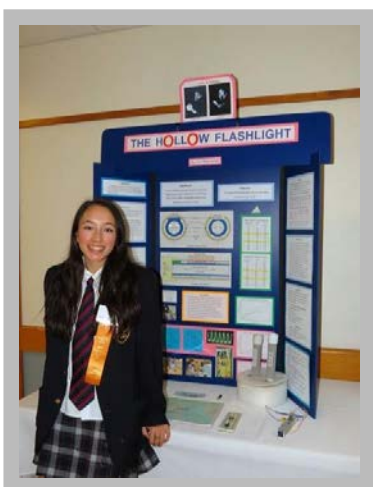
15 SEPTEMBER 2013

2014 SCIENCE FAIR: Sunday April 13 – Monday April 14

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## Participant: Ann Makosinski



*Ann Makosinski's project, "The Hollow Flash Light", is one of only 15 projects short-listed for the Google Science Fair. She is the only Canadian finalist. The news has literally gone around the world (read [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)). Ann has been entering projects in the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair since she was in Grade 7. We wish her great success at next week!*

## The President's Lab Bench



It's a new school year! And along with the new year, it's also a new Science Fair season. The Society for the Advancement of Young Scientists is here to encourage and support you to get involved with science.

In the sections that follow, you will see testimonials about what the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair means to participants, parents, organizers, and sponsors. Look forward to what teachers say next month - they are too busy right now!

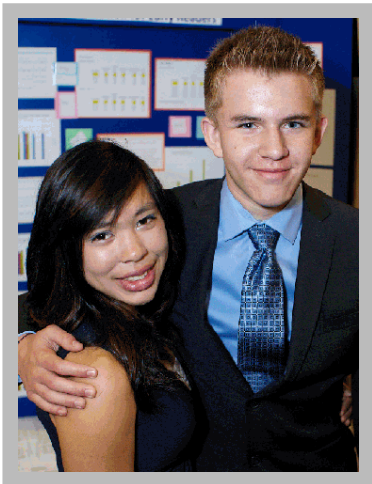
The Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair is open to all grade 4 to 12 students from Victoria up to Cambell River and from the neighbouring islands. Students farther north participate in the North Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair. Students come from public and private schools or are home-schooled.

Students, alone or in pairs, develop their own science projects on really any conceivable topic. They do their research and prepare to present it at the Regional Science Fair, this year on April 13 and 14, 2014, at the University of Victoria. Many students have the good fortune to be in a school that runs its own Science Fair, and the school will select projects to go on to the Regional Science Fair. Other students work independently, and register directly to enter the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair ([web.uvic.ca/~virsf](http://web.uvic.ca/~virsf)).

The important thing is that doing science is interesting, useful, and fun. It's for all kids, not just those who feel they are science-

I'm attending the Google Science Fair in Mountain View from Sep 21st - 23rd! I'm very excited to meet everyone there and see what the Google Headquarters are like! Of course, presenting to the judges and meeting other people who are interested in science like me is also a highlight of the trip. It's been a pretty hectic few months, and I have gotten a bit of media attention, so I've been quite busy with that, along with all the homework from grade 11. I also have two TEDx talks coming up, one in Redmond, Seattle and the other in Renfrew-Collingwood, Vancouver. Anyways, I'm very excited to head off this Saturday to Google, so lets go! Thank you VIRSF and everyone involved for making this possible for me!

**Participants: Matt Treble and Andrea Chan**



#### **What Science Fair Means to Us**

Over the past 2 years we have been participating in the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair and at the Canada Wide Science Fair. Both of our projects have been targeted at overall improving reading fluency and comprehension.

One thing we both love about Science Fair is how you get to pursue an idea that genuinely interests YOU. We both are very passionate about the field our projects have been under, and are eager to continue in our goal to improve reading comprehension and fluency this year! When doing a Science Fair project, the topic should always be something that interests you. Mainly, because you should have fun when working on your project as opposed to dreading it and not wanting to continue! If you pick something that you are genuinely interested in, we can guarantee you will have fun doing every part of your project!

oriented. The best thing is to see projects that relate to what the student finds most interesting. Let the natural curiosity, problem solving, and showmanship flourish!

*Randy Enkin, President, Society for the Advancement of Young Scientists*

### **Parent: Denise Kleu**

Vicki has participated in Science Fair for several years, beginning in Middle School. Her first project was in Grade 7 and she received nothing! However she enjoyed the experience and that provided the incentive for her to strive to present a better project the following year. Her efforts paid off and she placed 4th in her age group and received a ribbon and some certificates. By then she had a genuine interest in science and it no longer seemed like 'work' to do science fair – it became fun and there was keen anticipation to see project results. Happily for Vicki her efforts paid off and she was chosen to go to Canada Wide on 3 occasions and participate there too – always fun times for the group and a great opportunity to meet people and make new friends. Science Fair certainly impacted Vicki's choice of what she would like to study after school, and her 'young' dreams of becoming a teacher have changed and she now wishes to study medicine and specialize in paediatrics. Fortunately she has also been the recipient of several generous Science Fair related scholarships over the years, so this will help her to achieve her new dream.

### **Parent: Tim Ebata**

As a parent with a scientific background (I'm a Forest Entomologist), Science Fair has offered me the unique opportunity to watch my 12 year old daughter learn what it takes to become a scientist. Being exposed to the process of developing a hypothesis, designing experiments to test the hypothesis, collecting the data, analyzing the data, and presenting the findings at such a young age gets them "thinking like a scientist" early in their academic career that will benefit them in the future. I wish I had had such an opportunity when I was her age! I believe that science, like many things, is best learned by actually doing it and now has two years of science fairs (since Grade 6) to hone her skills. I believe her science fair experience has partially influenced her goal to become an environmental engineer.

I certainly appreciate the priority St. Margaret's school in Victoria places on having their students participate in the annual Science Fair and especially want to thank my daughter's science teachers for developing her positive attitude towards science.

Science fair has been a rewarding experience for both of us.

The other main thing we like about Science Fair is how when you are completely done all your work, you get to present your completed project to judges. The best part of presenting to judges is that you get to share your work with volunteer UVic students or other volunteers. For us, the best part about judging, is knowing that the judge will not shoot down our work. Meaning that even if we didn't do the best project, the judges will still respect our work and offer advice on how to improve as opposed to just saying it's flat out not good. The judges are very supportive which is awesome!

Those are some of the reasons we love doing projects for Science Fair!

### Organizer: Rossi Marx

The main reason I am involved with organizing the fair is the students, as simple as that. They are our future and they deserve the best that we can offer them, which includes giving them the opportunity to participate in a regional science fair.

As a scientist, it is exciting and humbling to see the kind of projects that are brought to the fair, and I am impressed by the quality of the science and the poise of the participants when they explain what their project is all about. Being involved in providing the opportunity for students to hone their skills doing science, to talk to like-minded peers, and to present their projects to judges and members of the community, and to see them coming back year after year, with better and better projects, is quite wonderful!

As a member of the organizing committee, the reason I keep coming back is the opportunity to work with a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers, which includes my fellow SAYS members who are tireless in their efforts to make sure that the fair will happen, including promoting the fair, and fundraising, and organizing awards, and then there are all the kind people who help out during the fair (again, it is humbling that there are people out there who do not hesitate to help me get name tags ready until 2 in the morning, not giving it a second thought!) and the dedicated teachers and parents who do not waiver in their support for the students. They are simply the best, and we are so lucky to have them!

As a Vancouver Islander, I am proud of the students participating in the fair and of all their accomplishments regionally,

## Parents: Valerie and John Kuehne

Participating in the Vancouver Island Science Fair was a wonderful experience for our son. The process of crafting a focused question right through to preparing the display board was full of excellent learning based on an idea he was curious about! And the Fair itself gave him both the opportunity to share his accomplishments and think critically about his work. We were not expecting him to earn the privilege to represent the Island at Canada Wide Science Fair, and that was a highlight of his school year! He has now been firmly 'bitten' by the science bug, and he will be back at the Island Fair next year with another project that is already well underway. We are grateful for the opportunity that the Vancouver Island Science Fair provided him to pursue a fascinating project and fuel his interest in science at the same time.

## Sponsors



### Why do our sponsors support the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair?

These kids are interested in what we are doing, learn about our services, and will know who to contact once they are working in the field.

*Ray Brougham, President - Prototype Equipment Design*

Youth aren't as interested in Science as they once were, thus, it is

nationally, and internationally. Vancouver Island has traditionally been extremely well represented at the Canada-Wide Science Fair and beyond, and there is no doubt in my mind that our students will continue to shine!

### **Web Resources**

Local:  
Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair: [web.uvic.ca/~virsf](http://web.uvic.ca/~virsf)

Provincial:  
Science Fair Foundation BC:  
[www.sciencefairs.ca/Resources/Students.aspx](http://www.sciencefairs.ca/Resources/Students.aspx)

National:  
Youth Science Canada:  
[sf.youthscience.ca/](http://sf.youthscience.ca/)  
Canada-Wide Science Fair:  
[cwsf.youthscience.ca/fairs/current](http://cwsf.youthscience.ca/fairs/current)

### **Contact Information**

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important to build up their interest so they see all of the exciting fields and opportunities science can offer. It's all about inspiration!  
*Scott Phillips, Founder and President - Starfish Medical*

When I moved from Italy, I had never heard of a science fair. However, my younger sister won multiple awards at the Vancouver Island Regional Science Fair, and I had the opportunity to chaperone the Vancouver Island team at the Canada-Wide Science Fair in Ottawa (1985). Through my sister, I became connected to the science fair, and have had the opportunity to judge on a few occasions. It's wonderful and I support it.

*Roberto Racca, Chief Information Officer, Past-President - JASCO*

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