

Chemistry and fun collide

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The University of Alberta and Actua teamed-up to bring youth in Bonnyville a world of fun through an interactive learning camp.

DiscoverE camp was at the Bonnyville Centennial Centre from July 17 to 20, the camp offered students from Grades 1 to 6 a unique STEM learning experience.

"This is a four-day bursary camp sponsored by Imperial Oil. Each day there are three to four projects involving chemistry, physics, and engineering," explained camp counsellor Vivienne Li.

The young scientists had their hands full with experiments all week long. When finished, students brought at least one project home each day.

Touching on a wide variety of scientific concepts, camp counsellors delivered their lessons in a way that resonated with campers.

"Just this morning, we were adding different types of chemicals to cranberry juice. Depending on how it reacted we would determine whether cranberry juice is an acid or a base," explained Li.

Making each project as hands-on as possible is an important part of DiscoverE. They believe students retain more information if they do the experiment themselves.

"One of the most meaningful things I've had a kid say to me was how much he enjoyed camp over school because of the hands-on aspect. They're able to experience everything we talk about," said counsellor Jaryl Schmidt. "We'll give a lesson, they learn something new, and then they get to apply it. I think



The DiscoverE camp hosted by the University of Alberta in partnership with Actua, kept kids busy.

Photo by DiscoverE at the University of Alberta

that means so much to every camper."

Knowing chemistry can be a tough topic to tackle, counsellors instead focused on specific units.

As opposed to an overall look at chemistry, students learn smaller units, like the pH scale.

To make sure everyone feels included, the projects are fit for all grade levels.

"We have a range of projects. Some of them will be familiar to the younger kids and some are more familiar to the older kids. We see a lot of mentorship here, if older students see younger ones struggling, they step-up and help their classmates," explained Schmidt.

Not only could campers take their work home, but they could eat it too. Using licorice, marshmallows and toothpicks, students

made candy DNA, an instant hit among the group.

Grade 3 camper Katie Noel had a tough time choosing whether she liked eating her creation, spending time with her friends, or her counsellors the most.

"I liked when we did the licorice, it was fun making it. My favourite part was my friends, or the teachers," said Noel.

The feeling was mutual; neither counsellor wanted the camp to end after seeing the difference they made with campers.

"There are campers who are returning from last year that remember what they learned and even remember their instructors. It shows how big of an impact this has on the community. We're really sad to go, we hope to be invited back to Bonnyville," added Li.

Barry Kalinski joins the race for reeve

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Until the next council is selected, it's hard for Kalinski to say which issues they would try to tackle first.

Instead, he's focused on tackling matters effecting the MD right now, such as high water levels on Moose Lake. Like many of the residents he represents, Kalinski wants the Alberta government to act before it's too late.

"We can't do very much until the government says we can. I'm no specialist in that field, but you would think if you dropped the weir by a foot or so, water in the lake would drop about a foot. If we don't do anything, it's going to get a lot worse when the ice melts in spring."

No matter who wins the upcoming election, Kalinski plans to continue contributing to the MD in any way possible. After dedicating 10-years to his ward, he's ready to expand his influence to the rest of the MD.

"I've been blessed to work with all the councillors and the reeve over the years. I enjoyed serving the people of my ward and if elected I will enjoy serving the entire region."



Barry Kalinski has thrown his name in the running for reeve.

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