

# Building a better bridge

By Rachel Savage

Students at John Caldwell School crossed their fingers as they competed in a pasta bridge contest on Friday, March 12. Prizes were awarded for the best looking bridge and for the bridges that withstood the most weight.

"It's getting more and more interesting every year because schools are falling into the groove of this event now and it's kinda interesting because you kinda take it to heart," said engineer Eric Ouellette. "It's another way for the association to show how fun engineering can be. It's interesting for them and a challenge. It's good because this event might help to create an engineer in the next 10 years or so."

First place went to Grade 5 student Casey St Amand, whose bridge held 69 pounds per square inch of pressure before collapsing.

Second place went to Christine Michaud at 52 pounds. In third place was Amy Gillespie at 41.6 pounds. Fourth place went to the team of Nikki McLaughlin and Marie-Chantelle Hudson at 35 pounds and in fifth place was Westen McLaughlin at 29 pounds. The award for the most esthetic bridge went to Danika Gagné and Shawni Beaulieu.

The prizes for the winners were: first place-\$75, second place -\$50, third place -\$25, fourth place -\$15 and the fifth place -\$10. The prize for the

most esthetic bridge was \$25. The first and second place winners will advance to the inter-school regional competition which will be held later this spring in Grand Falls.

Participants were allowed to use any kind of pasta combined with any brand of glue. The physical requirements had to be precise, and many contestants

were forced to lighten their bridges by removing pieces prior to the competition. The bridge could not exceed 800 g, and had to be a minimum of 18 inches long and a maximum of eight inches high. Pasta and glue were the only materials allowed, and the structure had to resemble a bridge.

First place winner Casey St

Amand said the secret to his success were the triangles that held it together. St Amand got the design idea from his parents.

The pasta bridge contest has gone on for approximately 10 years. The competition was organized by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of New Brunswick-Northwest Branch.



## Bridge builders

Pictured are the winners of the Pasta Bridge Contest 2004, sponsored by the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of New Brunswick-Northwest Branch. Shown (L to R) Winston McLaughlin, Marie-Chantelle Hudson and Nikki McLaughlin. Back row (L to R) Casey St Amand, Christine Michaud, Amy Gillespie, Shawni Beaulieu, Danika Gagné and contest organizer Eric Ouellette. (Rachel Savage photo)