

**PITCH IN CANADA**



# Sam Sherratt student wins area speech contest

*Humourous tale of scuba diving earns top honours*

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**

*The Champion*

As Katie Blasco was scuba diving in

Mexico on her March Break this year, the last thing she had on her mind was school-work.

But her new-found underwater hobby and a school assignment merged recently, creating a winning combination.

On May 13, the seventh grader competed at the annual grades 7 to 8 North Halton speech competition held at Sam Sherratt Public School.

She ended up taking first place for her humorous speech on her scuba diving adventure.

"I talked about my vacation in Mexico and how I became a certified scuba diver," said Katie, 12, who attends Sam Sherratt School.

Katie came out ahead of 16 other students who competed.

The students were assigned the speeches as part of their regular curriculum, and then school-wide competitions were held to determine who would compete at the North Halton competition.

### Nerves quickly calmed

Although she was nervous about giving her speech in front of a crowd, Katie said once she started and the audience began laughing — at the appropriate times — it became easier.

A trophy with her name plaqued on it will be displayed at her school.

Katie said it wasn't hard to choose her topic.

"I always like to talk about something I know well," she said, adding she thinks public speaking is important to learn — particularly since she wants to become a teacher and will one day speak in front of a class.

Steve Fraser, principal of Sam Sherratt, said he's proud of Katie's accomplishment.

"Katie's a very strong student. I thought she was marvelous," he said, adding, "All the kids did an amazing job."



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Sam Sherratt School student Katie Blasco shows the trophy she received for her speech on scuba diving.

Organizing the competition takes hours of work and the staff deserve recognition, Mr. Fraser said.

"It's because of the leadership of teachers like Mr. (Robin) Coverdale who work hard to prepare the students who make this possible."

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at [sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com).

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Bob Pyatt  
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