

Green works win prize

Elementary school wins the Canadian Tire Green School Challenge

By Monica Valencia

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For the students at Sts. Cosmas and Damian Catholic School warm days mean more time outdoors. But they're not out playing tag or having picnics — they're planting. Earlier this month, members of the school's Eco-Team dug up the schoolyard and planted trees donated by Canadian Tire.

The trees were part of a prize from the Canadian Tire Green School Challenge. Their winning submission, written by grade 6 students and edited by grade 8 students, described the school's eco-related activities, such as turning off computers, recycling pop tabs and having litterless lunches, teacher Nino Montanari said.

"The students were really motivated to win the contest because they were proud of what their school is doing for the environment," Montanari said.

With so many environmentally friendly activities the letter was not hard to write at all, said student Eduardo Alvarez.

Montanari said students like Alvarez impress him.

"I couldn't believe how involved the students were and how much they care for the environment," Montanari said. "They really want to make a difference."

Grade 8 student Sara Maltese, who helped edit the letter, said the Eco-Team taught her about the many things she could do to help the environment. For her, it was no surprise her school won the contest.

“I don’t want to sound conceited,” Maltese said. “But, we do deserve it.”

The 32-member club meets weekly. They organize events to engage other students and to teach them about renewable energy sources and ways to reduce garbage.

This year the school board also gave Sts. Cosmas and Damian Catholic School a gold Eco School certification for its many environmental initiatives.