

Brant-Argyle School honours student with new outdoor stage built in her memory

Community invited to help choose a name that honours Danica's joyful spirit

By Annaliese Meier

A meaningful vision has taken shape in the schoolyard of Brant-Argyle School, where a new outdoor stage now stands in memory of a young student whose light continues to shine.

The stage was built in honour of Danica deLaroque, a former student remembered for her love of dance, performance and joyful expression. The project was spearheaded by Danica's mother, Toni deLaroque, along with her teachers Sarah Hadfield, Kelly Friesen and Stephanie Loewen.

Nestled behind the school among grassy hills, the structure is more than a performance space — it's a tribute to Danica's vibrant spirit and a lasting gift to the community.

The outdoor space will serve multiple purposes, from student performances and school activities to community events and outdoor classroom use. It also includes a storage area for both performance props and outdoor education gear such as skis and snowshoes.

Brant-Argyle School and parent advisory council say the project was made possible through years of planning and the combined efforts of volunteers, local businesses and donors. Funding came from Danica's Village Memorial Fund and Manitoba's



Danica deLaroque, a former Brant-Argyle School student remembered for her bright spirit and love of performing, is the inspiration behind a new outdoor stage built in her memory.

Building Sustainable Communities Grant Program.

Supporters and contributors included Meridian Developments (project manager Duane Guenther), Interlake School Division, DGH Engineering, LaFarge Canada Inc., Lisa Riley, Rona Rockwood, Tuff Contracting, Monty's Concrete, A-Sure Clad Construction, Aspen Electric, Jeffery's Environmental Services and Access Credit Union.

"The building of the stage truly embodies 'small town, big heart.' We



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A new outdoor stage at Brant-Argyle School stands in memory of former student Danica deLaroque. Built with the support of family, staff, community members and local businesses, the stage will serve as a space for performances, outdoor learning and community events.

are so grateful to everyone who offered their hands and hearts to help turn this from a dream to a sketch and from a sketch into the stage you will find tucked behind Brant-Argyle School. This is a beautiful way to honour such a special little girl and her spirit," shared teacher Kelly Friesen.

As the community celebrates the completion of the stage, they're also being asked to help name it. Submissions are being accepted until May 9 and should honour Danica's legacy — celebrating friendship, kindness, rainbows, positivity and fun. Name suggestions can be submitted online or directly to the school.

The chosen name will be unveiled in June during an official ceremony.

Brant-Argyle School, often called the "Little Green Schoolhouse," is known for its hands-on approach to education and strong ties to nature and community. The new stage is just one part of a broader effort to enhance student life.

Next up, the school's parent council is planning to revitalize the chicken coop, build new garden beds and redesign the playground to replace aging equipment. A 50/50 fundraiser has been launched to support these projects, with tickets available online and a draw scheduled during the school's 79th Annual Spring Tea on May 9.

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