

Accent
On

Youth

Students Have 'Write' Stuff

Wrightwood Charter School Promotes 'Young Authors'

Students at Chicago International Charter School (CICS) Wrightwood, 8130 S. California Ave., can now call each other by a different name: author. Each student in the school participated in the annual statewide initiative, the Young Authors Contest.

This statewide contest enables students in kindergarten through eighth grade to write and submit their own stories in a state contest. Three winners from each classroom at Wrightwood won the school-wide contest. From the group of 75 school winners, six will be chosen to represent Wrightwood in the



READING LESSON—Dr. Theresa Nelson, CEO of Civitas Schools, reads with Wrightwood students during their Author's Circle at Borders Bookstore.

citywide competition.

"We believe in the Young Authors Contest because it helps to create a love for writing and reading at a very young

age," said CICS Wrightwood Director Eva Wilson. "There is no better way to get students excited about learning than to allow them to create

something on their own, something in which they can take pride."

Students had the choice of writing an informational, narrative, or poetry style short story and were judged in five areas:

focus, support/elaboration, organization, conventions and presentation. Wrightwood had over 650 entries this year.

The winners from Wrightwood who will be going on to the city competition are: "Becoming Me" by Lauryn Smith; "Lily, the Pink Zebra" by Devion Stevens; "The Missing Turtle" by Sydney Dukes; "What My Family Means to Me" by Jazmine Jordan; "Pause, Fast-Forward, Rewind" by Keven Stonewall; and "Santa's Memory" by Devonta Dickey.

As a reward for their accomplishments, all classroom winners were taken on a field trip to Borders Bookstore and were given a \$10 Borders gift card. While at Borders, students participated in an "Author's Circle," where they had the opportunity to share key points about their story, and make a public dedication of their book.

Students also had time to tour the store, browse, explore, and make their own purchase with their gift cards.



School Bells

Bill Lipinski's All-American Eagles and Southwest News-Herald are accepting entries for the essay contest, "Who Is My Favorite President and Why."

The contest is for sixth- seventh and eighth-grade students. The essay must be between 300 and 400 words long. Awards will be presented in each grade. Those who finish in first, second and third place will also receive a \$100 savings bond.

The school with the most participants will receive a check for \$200. The second-place school will receive a check for \$100. The deadline for submitting the entries is Monday, March 17.

All entries should be mailed to Bill Lipinski's All-American Eagles, 5838 S. Archer Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. More information can be obtained by calling (773) 582-7477.

Two students who attend St. Laurence High School, 5556 W. 77th St., Burbank, recently represented their school at the National Youth Leadership Forums on Medicine.

This program is dedicated to the early recognition of the nation's most promising physicians. The St. Laurence students were junior Joshua Venckus, a West Lawn resident, and senior Brian Bock.

Bock attended the forum in Boston, while Venckus stayed local and attended a 10-day meeting at UIC.

"I really enjoyed the entire event," said Venckus. "It gave me much insight into a possible career in medicine. I am glad I took part in it."

The third- and fourth-grade students at St. Symphorosa Elementary School, 6125 S. Austin Ave., went downtown on a field trip to Merle Reskin Theatre for a presentation of "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings."

Upon their return to school, a hot, homemade lunch of stopy joe sandwiches was provided by third-grade teacher Linda Jania and fourth-grade teachers Nancy Webb and Chris Golab. The fourth-graders wrote and mailed friendly letters to someone they care about and the replies are trickling in. The fourth grade is also participating for the first time in the Geography Bee.

A group of local students was named to the 2007 fall dean's list at Western Illinois University in Macomb.

To receive this award, a student must earn at least a 3.6 grade point average on a scale of 4.0.

Selected to the dean's list were freshman Lakethia Butler, Marquette Manor; senior Natalia Galvan, Chicago Lawn; freshman Edward Komenda, Garfield Ridge; sophomore Frederick Mondt, Garfield Ridge; senior Kenneth Murfay, Ashburn; and junior Danielle Person, Wrightwood.

The kindergarten classes of St. Richard School, 5025 S. Kostner Ave., recently celebrated the 100th Day of School.

Each class participated in a variety of activities and projects to mark this special day. Each student also made a special 100th Day hat to wear as a part of the celebration.

The staff at St. Richard School is currently accepting applications for new students for the 2008-09 school year. The school has openings in all grade levels including their full day 3- and 4-year-old preschool classes.

For more information about the school or to schedule an appointment for a tour of the school, call (773) 585-1221.

Sixth- and seventh-grade girls are invited to participate in the annual Grammar School Leadership Conference to be held Saturday, Feb. 23 at Queen of Peace High School, 7659 S. Linder Ave., Burbank.

Students will gather from 8:30 a.m. to noon. They will take part in icebreaker and team building activities.

They also will learn the art of goal setting and come away from the conference feeling more confident in their leadership abilities. The conference will be led by Rosemary Scanlan, director of recruitment, with the support of Peace students.

Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, call (708) 458-7600, ext. 292.

News for Accent On Youth, School Bells

News for the Accent on Youth section and School Bells column can be sent to the Southwest News-Herald, Editorial Department, 6225 S. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, IL, 60629.

Press releases can be sent by fax, (773) 476-7811, or by e-mail at

vonpub@aol.com. The deadline for news items is noon on Fridays.

"Student of the Month" forms also appear in the back section of the News-Herald for achieving students who may not always be recognized.

The candidates include students who volunteer and help others. They may not receive a lot of fanfare but have been

noticed by the school and community.

Students who might be overlooked are nominated for their unselfish commitment to the school and the surrounding community they live in.

Nominations can be taken for the school year, with the Student of the Month to be featured in March.