

Focus on Students Report

May 18, 2006

Tonight we are here to congratulate the seventeen students selected to represent McLean County Unit District No. 5 at the 32nd Annual Illinois Statewide Young Authors Conference and to thank the seventeen student judges who selected their manuscripts to represent our district.

| Title | Author | Grade |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| The Wishing Box | Aralee Bogar | 1 |
| The Life of a Peanut | Alexandra Marable | 4 |
| The Trail of Laughter | Kaitlyn Patterson | 5 |
| The Little Flea | Lizzie Wilson | 3 |
| Fido the Super Dog | Ryan Stites | 1 |
| Bored Britney's Not so Boring Balloon Adventure | Brianna Roy | 2 |
| Fear's Place | Kylie Biancalana | 5 |
| When My Dad Had Cancer | Madison Moser | 3 |
| Milk Route | Brianna Hines | 4 |
| A Look into the Past | Alexia Michelin | 5 |
| Inside a Collection of Poetry | Claire Steen | 6 |
| Skelston Castle | Kailey Harvey | 8 |
| Oscar and Alphonse | Erin McGinnis | 8 |
| Feel the Magic | Serene Helbig | 5 |
| Finding Freedom | Carly Pederson | 5 |
| Zeus' Story | Kyle Snow | 4 |
| Dinosaur Land | Dustin Mailloux | 2 |

Each student's manuscript was chosen to represent our school district through a process of elimination. The first selection process takes place at the building level where the Young Author Sponsor establishes a panel of judges who determines which manuscripts will be sent to the district office to be judged by 18 sixth grade judges. Each sixth grade judge is one of our students identified as gifted in the area of language arts. The student judges spend the day reading manuscripts using a scoring rubric to determine which of 57 manuscripts will go on to represent our district at the state conference. This is a Herculean task, and we thank our judges for their diligent attention and serious approach to this charge:

Jennie Barker, Lexie Bates, Erin Coppersmith, Alyssa Fields, Brooke Halteman, John Keith, William Koebel, Spencer Ludwig, Hannah Magnuson, Larissa Metz, Joe Mintun, Airius Reeves, Michael Sallee, Savannah Schaber, Chris Thankan, Caleb Wiebenga, and Helen Zhang

As a representative from McLean County Unit District No. 5, the seventeen young author representatives had the opportunity to attend the Illinois Young Authors Conference on May 20 where they spent the day with hundreds of other young authors from districts throughout Illinois along with noted children's authors. Their manuscripts were read and affixed with the official seal of the Young Authors Conference. The student representatives were then asked to serve as ambassadors of writing for our district.

It is our hope that the information these Young Authors gained from their experience at the conference will be shared with other students in their respective schools. Each Young Author was selected to represent all students in our district. We know that each of the students here tonight, the authors and judges alike, will be making many contributions to our district in the future. Some day you may even find yourself reading one of their books or, in the case of the judges, one of their book critiques.

"Educating each student to achieve personal success"

