



Glen Ellyn Spelling Bee Fund-Raiser Ends In A Tie

Glen Ellyn's first spelling bee, called SPELLAPALOOZA! was a raucous combination of entertainment and erudition (learning acquired by reading and study) that was destined to end as a photo finish. The event pitted teams from local organizations and businesses against each other in a community-wide "war of the words" on Friday, March 13 at Glenbard West High School with 300 people in attendance. More than \$6,000 was raised for the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center.

The Key Club from Glenbard South High School, who named themselves "Raiders Rule", started the competition by correctly spelling the word: "isle". They had taken advantage of a rule allowing them to ask the judges to use the word in a sentence, which eliminated other similar-sounding options. Nearly 80 words and more than nine rounds later, there were two teams still standing and the judges ruled the first annual SPELLAPALOOZA! a tie as time ran out (see top photo, left).

Sharing the grand prizes and glory were the team from Glen Crest Middle School, called the "Literati", which included Cindy Baker, Teri Pehta and Gina Lofgren; and left on the stage next to them at the end of the evening were Fiona Miller, Debbie Page and Gail Minkus, representing "Spellin' for Ellen", the team named in honor of long-time Resource Center supporter, Ellen Weissbrodt who passed away recently.

"The success of this first-time event is a tribute to Glen Ellyn whose residents and organizations supported SPELLAPALOOZA! in force," said Kasey Sanders O'Connell, executive board member and treasurer of the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center.

The ten participating teams drew numbers the evening before to determine the order in which they would compete. A round was completed when each team had a chance to spell a word. Teams had the opportunity to purchase a "free pass" for \$50 in case they misspelled a word and by the end of the evening, each had taken advantage of this option. The emcee for SPELLAPALOOZA! was CBS-TV Channel 2 morning

anchor, Don Schwenneker, a veteran spelling bee announcer.

Abraham Lincoln Elementary School, home of the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center, mounted a team called "Team Lincoln: We're Not Smarter Than This Fifth Grader", in honor of Lauren Dagget, a fifth-grade speller who competed with teacher John Bower and principle Shannon Cross.

As the parent organization for high school Key Clubs, the Glen Ellyn Kiwanis sponsored two teams. The Glenbard South Key Club team included Brittany Murphy, Martina Boyter and Nick Yam. Glenbard West, which has dubbed itself the "Spelltastics", featured the team of Julie Pfeffer, Madeline Hall and Claire Prichard.

The Glen Ellyn Public Library was well represented. Director Dawn Busey served as a judge and two teams with connections to the organization competed. The "Royal Readers" were sponsored by the Glen Ellyn Rotary Club and members included Beth Cusek, Eileen Higgins and Sara Missmiller. Friends of the Library was a late entry sponsored by an anonymous donor and their team included Gina Myers, Kathy Doyle and Mary Ozog.

Decked out in matching attire, the Glen Ellyn Junior Woman's Club fielded a team consisting of Becky Gadomski, Erin Blair and Whitney Cimaglia.

Elementary School District #41 Central Services Office, whose team name was "Magic Spells", worked their magic during the Team Spirit award competition as the biggest cheer from their fans in the audience won them a cake from Flour Barrel in Glen Ellyn. Members included Mark Memler, Marylou Gehringer and Phyllis Hanna.

More than 40 guests in the crowd joined in the Audience Participation portion of the evening, attempting to spell such words as avalanche, cheapskate and pterodactyl. It was Alexander Malesevic, a 12-year-old Hadley Junior High student, who won, spelling all ten words correctly. Hadley also fielded a team consisting of Kelly Coleman, Kim Hefner and Brett Cooper. (see top photo, right).

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Spring Event

Celebrate the conclusion of the seventh year of service by the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center! The special evening will feature a light buffet, entertainment, displays of work by the children and music. Enrollment for the summer program will take place during the celebration as well. Children registered with the Resource Center, their families, volunteers and members are all welcome.

2009 CELEBRATION

Friday, May 29, 2009
7:30 p.m.
Church of the Resurrection
1825 College Ave., Wheaton

Volunteer of the Year Award

In honor of long-time Resource Center supporter, Ellen Weissbrodt, who passed away recently, the Resource Center has announced a "Volunteer of the Year" Award which will recognize one individual for their contributions. Candidates must be a current and active volunteer for the program, donating a minimum of 100 hours during the 2008-9 school year; and have demonstrated an ability to produce positive changes and set an example for the children. The winner will be announced at the celebration on May 29. For more information, contact executive board member, Steve Keate, at smkeate@gmail.com or by phone at 630-532-2522.

Volunteer, Member Meeting

Calling all members and volunteers of the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center! Don't miss a fantastic opportunity to help develop ways to inform the community about the Resource Center. Attend a meeting open to all interested in making a contribution on Thursday, April 16, at 7 p.m., at the Glen Ellyn Library.



SPELLAPALOOZA! (continued from reverse side)

Between rounds, the crowd of several hundred was entertained by Glenbard West's singing troupe "A Cappella Underground" as well as the theater antics of "That One Group", and a spoofed version of "Romeo and Juliet." Door prizes were also awarded throughout the evening.

Words for SPELLAPALOOZA! were chosen by event organizers from the PAIDEIA, the National Spelling Bee Book, published by Scripps Howard, and from Webster's International Dictionary. In addition to the Library's Dawn Bussey, judges included Dr. Pamela Zimmerman, associate superintendent for education services of Glenbard High School District 87; Peter Cooper, incoming Village of Glen Ellyn board member; and newspaper reporter Elizabeth Macik. As one team after another was eliminated, the tension mounted and

the difficulty of the words increased. By the end, it was just Glen Crest's "Literati" and the "Spellin' for Ellen" team who survived.

They traded spelling and misspelling words like paupiette (a thin slice of meat or fish wrapped around a filling), and chevelure (a head of hair). A rule in which the winner must correctly spell a word misspelled by their opponent, plus one additional word, lengthened the drama.

And when the last word, ombrophobous, which means unable to live in the presence of long, continuous rain, it was the judges who could no longer live with another word. And so it was a "no decision" for the first annual SPELLAPALOOZA!, certainly setting the stage for an exciting rematch in 2010.



About the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center

Welcome to The Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center! We're a nonprofit organization providing after-school and summer literacy programs for children from low-income families in Glen Ellyn, IL. Tutoring is provided in all academic subjects, with an emphasis on educating students for whom English is a second language. Founded in 2002, the program served more than 100 children in 2008, including more than 50 percent refugees, representing families from 14 different countries in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. The Children's Resource Center is open Monday through Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. at space provided by District 41 at Lincoln Elementary School, 380 Greenfield Ave., Glen Ellyn. The program is made possible by the support of community volunteers and organizations as well as grants. Plus, for just a \$50 annual fee, Children's Resource Center members help provide much needed resources. Donations and member fees are tax deductible. Please visit the website for more details.