

Press Release From: Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center
Contact: Laura Glaza
Phone: 630-561-3080; Cell: 630-561-3080
Email: llglaza@aol.com
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Glen Ellyn Spelling Bee "War of the Words" Fund Raiser Ends In A Tie *First Annual Spellapalooza! Benefits Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center*

GLEN ELLYN, Ill. – March 15, 2009 – Glen Ellyn's first-ever spelling bee featured 10 teams representing a cross-section of the community in a spirited "war of the words" fundraiser at Glenbard West High School on March 13th.

Called *SPELLAPALOOZA!*, the event raised more than \$5,000 for the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center, a local literacy program. CBS-TV Channel 2 morning anchor, Don Schwenneker, hosted the event. Entertainment between rounds was provided by Glenbard West's singing troupe "A Cappella Underground" as well as the theater antics of "That One Group". Door prizes were also awarded throughout the evening.

The teams drew 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. Those who successfully spelled their word moved to the next round.

Local organization, schools and businesses competed for the top honors under a variety of creative names and banners, including:

- Abraham Lincoln Elementary School "Team Lincoln: We're Not Smarter Than This Fifth Grader"
- Glen Crest Middle School "Literati"
- Glenbard South High School "Raiders Rule" sponsored by the Glen Ellyn Kiwanis
- Glenbard West Key Club "Spelltastics" sponsored by the Glen Ellyn Kiwanis
- Glen Ellyn Juniors Women's Club "Queen Bees"
- Glen Ellyn Public Library "Royal Readers"
- Glen Ellyn Friends of the Library "Superphonics"
- Hadley Junior High "Wildcat Word Warriors"
- School District 41 Central Services Office "Magic Spells"
- "Spellin' for Ellen" a team honoring long-time Glen Ellyn Resource Center supporter, Ellen Weissbrodt, who recently passed away

"Raiders Rule, started the competition by correctly spelling the word: "isle". Nearly 80 words and more than nine rounds later, only the "Literati" and "Spellin' for Ellen" were still standing. 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. *SPELLAPALOOZA!* was ruled a tie as time ran out.

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.

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. Sixty guests in the crowd joined in the Audience Participation portion of the evening. It was Alexander Malesevic, a 12-year-old Hadley Junior High student, who won the prize, spelling all ten words correctly.

“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 Resource Center provides tutoring 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. More than half of students served are refugees, representing families from 14 different countries in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

Refugees are defined as those who flee their homeland and cross an international border because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, social group or political opinion. Unless the situation changes, refugees are unable to return home and must find another country in which to permanently resettle.

For information about the Glen Ellyn Children’s Resource Center, including how to become a member, make a donation, or volunteer, please visit www.gecrc.org or call 630-899-9919.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

SPELLING BEE ENDS IN A TIE

The teams from Glen Crest Middle School and “Spellin’ for Ellen” celebrate after tying for top honors in the first annual SPELLAPALOOZA! spelling bee, which benefited the Glen Ellyn Children’s Resource Center. From left were members of the "Spellin' for Ellen" team, Debbie Page, Gail Minkus and Fiona Miller; event emcee Don Schwenneker, CBS-TV Channel 2 morning anchor; and the "Glen Crest Literati" team of Gina Lofgren, Teri Pehta and Cindi Baker.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BEST SPELLER AT LOCAL BEE

No one was smarter than this middle schooler as 12-year old, Alexander Malesevic, was a winner by spelling all ten words correctly in the audience participation round of the SPELLAPALOOZA! spelling bee which benefited the Glen Ellyn Children’s Resource Center.