



WEF's Spelling Bee and Trivia Contest a Big Success You Had to "Bee" there...

The Westwood Educational Foundation held its 10th Annual Spelling Bee and Trivia Contest on March 8th, 9th and 10th. The Martha Jones School auditorium was buzzing with over 340 third, fourth and fifth graders representing 92 teams who participated in the Spelling Bee, sponsored by NSTAR. Children from all five elementary school assembled teams of three or four back in December and spent the next couple of months practicing words from their "Paideia", a book of over 4000 challenging words given to them at registration. "Just participating is such an accomplishment" mentioned Katie Wheeler, co-chair of the event. This year we had 40 third grade teams which was the largest turnout of third graders ever." Each child received a certificate of participation, individually personalized, as well as a commemorative WEF notepad as a reward for participating. Katie and her co-chair Kelly Harrington, were very impressed by how prepared children seemed. On the day of the Bee, teams looked so excited, dressed in costumes to match the creative team names they invented. There were numerous bee takeoffs, like "Queen Bees", "Buzzing Bees", "Got Honey?" and "The Stingers". The spelling theme was a popular team moniker, with "Xtreme Spellers", "Super Sonic Spellers", "The Four Spellateers" and "Spellcheckers" making things fun.

Selectman Nancy Hyde returned again this year to moderate the third grade bee while Superintendent John Antonucci moderated the fourth and fifth grade contests for the first time. "I was very impressed by how many hard words the kids could spell," Mr. Antonucci added. Four teams at a time were called to the stage and contestants were given 20 seconds to write the correct spelling of the word on their white board. Winners of each foursome advanced to the second round before a champion team was crowned in the final round. David O'Leary returned for another year as the seasoned judge to oversee the event.

The third grade team "Spell Breakers", Justin Grady, Kevin Murray, Hamza Chaudhry and Eric Bamford, friends from the Downey School, "surfed" their way to winning, dressed in their Hawaiian outfits and flip flops. "The Einsteins" team from Hanlon School, Jake Dainis, Meredith Gee, Cameron Iarrobino and Alex Miller showed their smarts by finishing as runners-up.



3rd Grade Spellers – The Spell Breakers



4th Grade Spellers – Sam Bams

The fourth grade team from the Sheehan School “Sam Bams” Zoe Jordanides, Caroline Porter, Ela Hazar and Elizabeth Messineo banged away at all the other contestants to pull out a first place finish. “The Downey Dynamos” including Mara Davoudi, Emily Bamberry, Sarah VanWagenen and Melissa McManus” gave them a run for their money and finished as runner-up.

The fifth graders have competed in the two prior years, but still provided lots of excitement in this year’s contest. The “Soaring Spellers”, Caitlyn Moore, Leanne Murray, Katharine Nedder and Lisa Petrie, slipped by the “Spell Checkers”, Jeffrey Maloof, Carter Peckinpaugh and Chris Irvine on the final word, “platoon”.



5th Grade Spellers – Soaring Spellers



Trivia Contest Winners – The Fantastic Four

The Adult Trivia Contest was held Friday evening. Twenty teams of four adults put their heads together to answer trivia questions from the 90’s edition of the popular game, Trivial Pursuit. John Koot, of Newton, celebrated his tenth year as moderator of the adult event. Questions from several different categories including sports, technology, food and fashion trends, important news events and leisure time activities challenged the participants’ knowledge of useless facts. Teams donated \$100 to participate. If a team was knocked out in the first round, they could buy back their participation for the second round. The first team to win 4 points won the round. Prior year winners, The “Sesquipedalians”, Evelyn and Michael Somers, Judy Frodigh and Jim Conway successfully made it to the final round again. However, they were triumphed by the “Fantastic Four”, superheroes of trivial knowledge. The Four heroes, Bob DeAngelis, Greg Radner, David Russell and Brian Harrington, flexed their muscles to pull out a win, with the answer to the final question: “Who pitched over 200 games in which he has

struck out at least 10 batters? For those of you who aren't trivial superheroes, the answer is Nolan Ryan.

Winners of the Spelling Bee and the Trivia Contest received trophies, and had their names engraved on plaques that will be displayed in the Westwood Public Library. Thanks to NSTAR for their repeat gold sponsorship and to Roche Bros. for donating refreshments for the Trivia Contest. Monies raised from the Bee and the Trivia contest will be given back to the community in form of grants in the next grant cycle this spring.

Submitted by: Mary Beth Persons, Publicity Chairperson, Westwood Educational Foundation