

MARCH 16, 2016: Essay Contest Award Ceremony

AWARDS: On Wednesday, March 16 at 6p.m., the community was invited to fill the San Carlos Branch Library, hear the essays and congratulate this year's local San Carlos winners of the 19th Annual Writing for Literacy Library Essay Contest. This annual contest is open to all students, public, private, parochial and home schooled, in grades 4, 8 & 10, who attend a school served by the San Diego Public Library system. The San Carlos area schools participating this year submitted 266 essays which were individually read and judged by Margrette Carr, Joan Hayes, Cathy Todd, Patty Woodall, and Barbara Woodall. All were impressed at the high quality of the student essays. The Woodalls chair this event for the San Carlos Branch.

WINNERS:

This year's local winners are Evan Hurst, Kate Le, and Tiffany Nguyen from Kimberly Filner's 4th grade class at Benchley Weinberger; Ella Moore from Erin Keegan-Nelson's and Joshua Beail from Gretchen Sites' 4th grade classes at Dailard Elementary; Antoine Nougier from Debra Skaar's 4th grade class at Gage Elementary; Jakob Romaine Gleim from Susan Barrett's, Talin Gardini from Craig Wilsie's, and Meredith Eaton** from Louise Volpe's 4th grade classes at Green Elementary. This year, there were no 8th grade entries. Edie Mueller, Victoria Crisologo**, and Noelle Stewart** , from Wendy Lange's 10th grade class at Patrick Henry High School were also named local winners. Those with an ** after their name will have their essays entered into the City-wide completion where four Grand Prize Winners at each grade level will be announced during a ceremony on Thursday, May 5, 2016, at the Balboa Park Club. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the ceremony starts at 6:30 p.m.

SPONSORS, PRIZES, and TOPICS: Top prize winners will each receive a monetary award AND a laptop computer. One special prize of \$500 will be awarded in memory of our own JACK and CAROLYN WINER for the best overall essay. This contest is co-sponsored by Friends of the San Diego Public Library, San Diego Public Library and the Unified School District Library Media Teachers, KPBS in conjunction with the "One Book, One San Diego" selection(s), and Computers 2 SD Kids (C2SDK). Topics included the current "One Book, One San Diego" book selection(s), or "If All the Books in the World Were About to Disappear, but you could save one, what would it be? and why?"

CONTEST HISTORY: The contest was started at the San Carlos Branch Library by its supporter and past SCFOL and FSDPL President, Jack Winer, who envisioned a contest where our youth would become engaged in the literary arts. The first contest in 1997, received strong support from School Board Member Sue Braun and area assistant superintendent, Dr. Eloisa Cisneros. The entry forms and contest rules were developed with the collaboration of Librarians Wendy Gay (from Lewis Jr. High), Marian Day (from Pershing Jr. High) and Sharon Boyette (from PHHS). It was sponsored by the San Carlos and Benjamin Branch Libraries and limited to the twelve local schools, grades 3 through 12, in the "Henry Cluster" (feeder schools to Patrick Henry High School). There were 145 entries and 31 finalists at all grade levels which brought over 200 parents, teachers and students to the awards ceremony held on May 20, 1997 at the San Carlos Branch Library. Lucia C. Barbu, an eleven year old, 4.0 GPA, 7th grader from Pershing Jr. High, was that year's Grand Prize winner with an essay titled, "The Importance of Libraries to the Community." Does anyone know where Lucia is now? We would love to get in touch with her.

Essay topics were limited to four subjects: The Importance of Libraries; Heroes; Building a Better World; and Getting Along in the Community. The first judges were the publisher of the

Mission Times Courier, a retired San Diego Union editor, and a local active Real Estate agent. Thirty-one school winners were presented with Certificates of Recognition from the offices of U.S. Congressmen Brian Bilbray and Randy Cunningham, State Senator Dede Alpert, and Assemblywoman Susan Davis. City Council Member Judy McCarty was the keynote speaker and also presented Certificates. In 1997, first and second place prizes were \$100 and \$50 savings bonds respectively. Engraved Cross pens were given to those with Honorable Mention awards. All entrants were awarded paperweights displaying the Lamp of Knowledge emblem, and the inscription: "Friends of the Library Essay Contest Finalist, 1997." Does anyone still have theirs? We would love to see it or have a picture. The result of everyone's effort is the City-wide Essay Contest we have today. Jack Winer was also instrumental in the City's right-to-purchase agreement of the Jackson & Golfcrest corner lot on which we will build the new, 25,000 sq. ft. San Carlos Branch Library and Community Center. In his honor, the community room of the San Carlos Branch Library was named the Winer Family Community Room & Art Gallery during the library's 40th Anniversary year in 2014. The three Winer sons continue to support the work begun by their father and hope to see the completion of his dream for a new San Carlos Branch Library.