



December 7, 2015

2015 Walton County Public Speaking Contest

Public speaking has been rated in numerous studies as one of the all time top fears of the general public. The thought of standing before a group and speaking has given many a brave individual cause to retreat.

The Walton County 4-H Program in conjunction with Tropicana and local schools provides youth a chance to demonstrate their speaking proficiency before a group with the Annual 4-H Tropicana Public Speaking Contest on December 3, 2015. Through this experiential learning project, thousands of youth annually learn how to write and deliver a speech effectively.

4-H Agent Jena Brooks opened the competition with remarks and praise for the young contestants on their bravery and diligence in making it to the County Competition. Due to 4-H Tropicana, 38 participants had overcome that pervasive fear of public speaking and made it to the County Competition while over 2000 others have developed a lifelong useful skill that will serve them in future endeavors.

The first place winner in the 4th grade division was Raleigh Reed who delivered a speech entitled "My Pet Goat, Little Bit." Second place winner was Aubriyah Smith "Gods and Goddesses." Third place winner was Zoe Orange "Diabetes." 4th grade contestants also placed in the following awards: Honorable Mention, Auburn Hamer "Happiness Is...", Most Informative Piper Kurfurst "Polar Bears," Most Entertaining Steele Marshall "My Three Year Old Grandpa," and Most Persuasive Amelia Dykes "Why I have a Love/Hate Relationship with my Siblings."

The first place winner in the 5th grade division was MacKenzie Campbell who delivered a speech entitled "My Pet Goat, Little Bit." Second place winner was Hannah Shoaf "Living Life Fun-Sized." Third place winner was Ava Adkinson "My Dad: Tough or Teddy." 5th grade contestants also placed in the following categories: Honorable Mention Eanna Rodriguez-Lombardo "The ABC's of Me," Most Informative Riley Parmeley "Vocal Cord Polyps," Most Entertaining Duncan Crittenden "Why Do Song Lyrics Not Make Sense?," and Most Persuasive Morgan Reynolds "Life Beyond Technology."

The first place winner in the 6th grade division was McCaid Paul who delivered a speech entitled "The Day the Ever Ready Bunny Went Down." Second place winner was Haylee Hayes "The English Language." Third place winner was Haley Permenter "North and South." 6th grade contestants also placed in the following categories: Honorable Mention Lily Jameson "All Wrapped Up," Most Informative Emma Salinas "Life with Diabetes," Most Entertaining Foley Barrett "Babysitting," and Most Persuasive Sara Thompson "Don't Stop Believing."

In Walton County, more than 2016 students from 11 schools participated in the contest this year. More than 2 million youth have participated in 4-H Tropicana Public Speaking Contest since its beginning and 53 out of 67 Florida counties participate annually in the event.

Tropicana has sponsored the contest since 1969 and provides classroom materials for teachers, certificates of participation, medallions for school winners, trophies for county winners, summer camp scholarships for 1st place winners and Tropicana orange juice refreshments for the county contest.

Founded in 1902 as an outreach to rural youth, 4-H has 60 million alumni and involves 28 percent of youth in America, according to the U.S.D.A. Florida 4-H is the youth development program of the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, which is part of UF/IFAS. In Florida, 4-H is active in all 67 counties. For more information about 4-H in Walton County, visit Walton.ifas.ufl.edu/4hy and/or call the office at 850-892-8172 to speak to your 4-H Agent Jena Brooks. **Remember, regardless of placing or competing in 4-H Tropicana, youth ages 8-18 can still compete in the Walton County County Events which is tentatively scheduled for April 28, 2015.**