



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Area Youth Celebrated in Chippewa Valley Book Festival's Young Writers Read Showcase

The Young Writers Read Showcase successfully kicked off the 21st Chippewa Valley Book Festival on October 24. Seventeen selected young authors read their winning entries, prose or poetry, from the stage of the Grand Theatre in Eau Claire. Each participant received a gift certificate to purchase a book of their choice from Dotters Books. Douglas Pearson, creator of the Showcase, served as MC for the program. To limit direct contact, the program was divided into two parts, elementary and middle school, and the audience was restricted to family members of the readers. Proof of vaccination or a negative test was required for adults as were masks for everyone.

The Showcase committee was pleased to note that the nine selected students in grades three to five attend six different Eau Claire elementary schools - Manz, Locust Lane, Putnam Heights, Robbins, Roosevelt, and Sam Davey and included a home schooled student. The program began with a poem from third grades Phoebe French "Horses;" followed by fourth grader Isla Karr with "Imagination Poem." Fifth grader Avery Barrows read the poem, "Dream." Prose pieces reflected a variety of topics from the writers own experience, Zak Zielski, "The Muskie and the Snap;" Angela Le, "Cross your Fingers;" fantasy, Noura Alasagheirin, "Drawing Portals;" Bethany Strand, "The Plant Lady;" Addison Polzer, "The Black Lagoon," and adventure - Kellen Hicks, "Tiny but Mighty."

Middle school students from South, DeLong, North Star and one homeschool student performed to an audience of their family members and a few special guests. Aidan Klammer read the poem, "Monsters," and "The Pioneers," a story that he described as a combination of Laura Ingalls Wilder and "Twilight Zone." Other selections included a fairy tale by Elisabeth Keyes, "The Girl and the Magic Jar;" Presleigh Olson-Buehler's "Touchdown" and Ollie Oster's "Coffee with the Gays" described rising to meet a challenge. Will Finn aka *Phoenix Flame* created his own mythology in "The Wings of Phoenix" and Ava Loomis elicited the trauma of arriving too late to save a life in "One Step Too Late." Lucah France concluded the program with a selection of short poems, "A Collection of Memories."

Asked why they enjoy writing, Aiden Klammer explained, "It's exciting to know that you have the power to create whole new worlds with only a pencil and paper." Ollie Oster added that you can "invent your own world that can have any amount of good fortune or bad luck." Noura Alasagheirin likes that "things don't need to be true or logical." Phoebe French enjoys writing "because it helps me express my feelings and thoughts."

The Young Writers Read Showcase was a part of the Chippewa Valley Book Festival which took place from October 24 to October 29 with both in person and virtual presentations. For the full festival re-cap, visit cvbookfest.org/2021-festival-events. Please reach out to chippewavalleybookfestival@gmail.com for all graphic inquiries.

The Chippewa Valley Book Festival partners with the Pablo Center at the Confluence, and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Foundation to provide literary programming for all Chippewa Valley residents.

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