

## Junior wins annual school-wide Shakespeare recitation contest



*Lauren Wagoner, the winner out of six students, will continue to the county-wide competition and hopes to go as far as last year's winner, Jack McDonald, who placed second in the nation.*

By Sarah Hampton Cheatham  
Copy Editor

On February 11, junior Lauren Wagoner won Grimsley's annual school-wide Shakespeare Recitation Competition with a monologue from "The Taming of the Shrew."

Meghan Hoffman came in second, and Kelsey Simmons took third.

In addition to the three placers, Lacie Katz, Zach Brown, and Kathleen Casto also participated.

Though some contestants participated mainly for Mrs. Angie Kratzer's extra credit incentive—all six participants were her students—others took advantage of the opportunity to practice their acting and gain exposure to new types of theatre.

"I am interested in acting, and Shakespearean acting is a type I'd never done before, so I wanted to try it," said Wagoner. "I really just wanted to expand my acting skills, but

the extra credit was certainly an added bonus."

"I do a lot of theater, and this was another outlet for me. Shakespeare is unlike any other writing out there, and it's definitely an experience to perform his works," said Hoffman.

Mrs. Kratzer, the competition organizer, feels that the contest is a positive experience for all students, not just actors looking to perfect their craft.

"Students need exposure to literature that authors frequently make allusions to in their works," said Kratzer. "I think students should take advantage of every public speaking opportunity given to them."

Wagoner will compete at the county level on March 6. If she makes it to the nationwide competition, she will travel to New York to compete on the stage of the famous Lincoln Center. If she wins the national contest, Wagoner will receive an all-expense paid trip to England this summer.

"I'm very nervous about the county contest," said Wagoner. "My win here was very unexpected, and I'll be up against much more experienced students. But you never know, I'll just have to see what happens. I only hope I can uphold the reputation set by Jack McDonald, last year's winner."

Six competitors in Grimsley's annual Shakespeare recitation competition line up on stage to take a bow after their performances. Junior Lauren Wagoner, second from left, won the contest and will continue to the county-wide competition.

Rodriguez photo

## Sophomore testing creates heated debate

While many argue that the practice competency test sophomores took will prepare them for the real exam, others say that it just wastes valuable class time.

By Brian Gould  
Staff Writer

The sophomore class will be given a comprehensive test later this year to determine if students can graduate. Sophomores have recently taken a practice comprehensive test to prepare for the required exam.

However, the days missed due to inclement weather, along with many other distractions from the normal class schedule, have caused some to question the wisdom of two mornings devoted to faux-testing.

The practice test was taken Wednesday, February 4, and Thursday, February 5, during first and second periods.

Freshmen, juniors, and seniors only missed second periods.

Sophomores missed two periods, which concerned many teachers and students who need class time to make up the missed material from snow days.

"The practice tests were pointless. [The tests] made sophomores miss first and second period for two consecutive days, which put us back on our work," said sophomore Chris Lutz.

The missed classes are not the only source of unease for students. English and math teachers have stressed the importance of these tests as imperative to a student's ability to graduate.

"I think we should prepare for them within English or math once a week if the 10th grade competency test is that important. We take plenty of standardized tests as it is, but I'm not sure if that will ever change," said sophomore Mary Grace Miller.

Though some sophomores are anxious about the actual tests later this year, many students view it as another redundant test that will be easily passed.

"We've taken so many tests like this that we've been prepared. [All that should be done] is review; I don't think we need to practice," said sophomore Rachel Higgins.

English teachers also express opinions on the tests because they not only have to prepare 10<sup>th</sup> graders for the

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