



WINNERS FROM THE fourth, fifth and sixth grades were (seated, from left) Josh Hinesley, Lucas Wagenseil, Chrissy Hewett, Tonia Jackson and Crystal Widener; and standing, Patrick Covil, Clif Cheek, Amelia Jessen and Lean Sloane.

STUDENTS RECEIVE TROPHIES

Program Encourages Young Authors' Creative Efforts

BY SUSAN USHER

Want to meet an author? Just drop by Shallotte Middle School and chat with any of the nearly 400 students in grades four through eight in the Young Authors Program.

The program encourages students to learn to express themselves through various types of writing, with the initial emphasis on creativity. Since the start of the school year, all of the participants have polished their writing and editorial skills, as well as their ability to think through a project before starting to write.

Last week students who completed portfolios were recognized for their efforts at a two-day Young Authors Conference.

Each finished portfolio included a poem, short story, a letter to a public official on a topic of current interest and a "free choice". Depending on their grade level, students also completed either a descriptive or persuasive piece.

Each final writing exercise represented their best work, the result of "process" writing. Students first plan what they will write, then write it, edit it for mechanics and rewrite it for content, often relying on the



SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE winners are (seated, from left) Susan Alexander, Becky Smith and Rachel Swain, and standing, Minde Vince, Aaron Hawkins and Kenny McGee.

critical eye of a fellow classmate for help.

The results varied in subject matter and style, as demonstrated last Thursday when selected seventh and eighth grade students read some of their work to an appreciative audience in the school library. A day earlier fourth, fifth and sixth grade students shared the podium.

Moses, a former slave who served as a conductress on the Underground Railroad, figured prominently in writings by several of the upperclassmen, including a poem by Aaron Hawkins.

In "The Big Break," Madonna Gause describes a player gets a chance on the court only to make a basket on the wrong goal. Taken out of the game, she's determined to do better next time out.

Minde Vince shares the "Thoughts

of an Unknown Soldier" as he struggles with a sense of duty and the child's questions he knows he may be called on to answer: "Daddy, what are you killing people for?"

One student wrote a letter to Saddam Hussein, but most letters went to government officials closer home, like the Brunswick County Board of Education office.

Johnathan Carlisle wrote Superintendent P.R. Hankins opposing the possibility of a 12-month school year, while Sam Slade wrote asking that the schools not go to a four-day week.

"You all are winners because you have achieved what you have set out to do," program coordinator Janice Gore told the students last Thursday.

However, 15 received trophies for their outstanding entries, with grade-

level winners for poetry, short story and overall portfolio excellence.

Receiving trophies were these students:

Fourth: Patrick Covil, poetry; Clif Cheek, short story; Lucas Wagenseil, total portfolio excellence;

Fifth: Tonia Jackson, poetry; Amelia Jessen, short story; and Chrissy Hewett, total portfolio excellence;

Sixth: Josh Hinesley, poetry; Leah Sloane, short story; and Crystal Widener, total portfolio excellence;

Seventh: Kenny McGee, poetry; Becky Smith, short story; and Susan Alexander, total portfolio excellence; and

Eighth: Aaron Hawkins, poetry; Minde Vince, short story; and Rachel Swain, total portfolio excellence.

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