



Competition: The girls who participated in the oratorical contest are (seated from left) Michelle Leffingwell, Bridgette Bearss and Emily Moses. Standing from left are Diana Platt, Jaleece Lavine and Erika Rich. Bearss will compete in regionals.



Contestants: The boys who participated in the oratorical competition are (from left) Sarnad Eiwaz, Julian Branch and Kevin George, who will advance to the regional competition. Branch placed second and Eiwaz third.

Two students head to regional oratorical competition

A Farmington area middle school boy and girl will head to a regional Optimist Club oratorical competition April 17.

The students, Bridgette Bearss from Warner Middle School, and Kevin George from Power Middle School, were chosen to represent the Farmington Farmington Hills Breakfast Optimist Club following local competition March 3 and 10.

"The main thing is that this is an opportunity for the kids to do public speaking," said Marguerite Smith, Optimist Club president.

Bearss and George took top

honors during the local competition from among five girls and three boys.

This year's topic was "Optimism in My Life." "They all have the same topic across the country," Smith said.

The winners at the regional level at Abbott Middle School in West Bloomfield will go on to state competition. Contestants in the state competition will vie for a \$1,500 scholarship.

"There could be as many as 30 clubs represented at the region-

OPTIMIST CLUB

als with boy and girl winners," Smith said.

Runners up at the local level were Michelle Leffingwell from Power Middle School and Julian Branch from Warner Middle School.

Other students who participated were Jaleece Lavine, Diana Platt, Erika Rich and Emily Moses, and Sarnad Eiwaz.

The topic gave students the

chance to talk about what optimism means to them. Their speeches included themes such as finding the bright side of things when dealing with mistakes, believing in yourself, giving off positive energy and the right to be proud, enthusiastic and hopeful.

Students were judged on originality, poise, content, delivery, presentation and overall effectiveness.

Judges for this year's contest were Priscilla Brouillette, vice

president of the Farmington Public Schools board of education, Joanne Maliszewski, Farmington Observer editor, and Jim Stark, Northwest Gazette publisher.

The Farmington Farmington Hills Breakfast Optimist Club's motto is "Friend of Youth." The oratorical contest is one of a number of programs sponsored by the club. Members meet 7:30-8:30 a.m. every Wednesday at San Marino Golf Course. If you are interested in the club, call Smith, 474-9680.

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Farmington area represented at wildlife art fest

The 1999 Michigan Wildlife Art Festival is around the corner March 26-28 at the Southfield Pavilion in Southfield. For the first time, the Michigan Wildlife Art Festival will highlight wildlife of the tropics along with traditional North American wildlife and environmental themes.

"We want people to act locally, but to think globally," said Joe Derek, Farmington Hills naturalist, who will volunteer and represent the city of Farmington Hills at the event.

"It's important to save wildlife here, but all over the world as well," Derek added.

Oklahoman Jan Martin

McGuire will serve as the featured artist in 1999. She will be joined by special guest artists Richard Sloan and Gamin Rotnavira, as well as spotlight artist Carol Brest van Kampen, all among the world's leading painter of tropical wildlife.

Sixty artists will bring their originals, prints, stone, metal, wood, scratchboard, and acrylic works of wildlife, environmental and nostalgic Americana.

which visitors may bid on decoys hand painted by area celebrities, some from Farmington Hills. Proceeds from the auction will go to the Michigan Wildlife Habitat Foundation.

The following is a roster of decoy painters: Joe Derek; Joanne Maliszewski, Farmington Observer editor; Jim Hardy, San Marino Golf Course supervisor and watercolorist; Jim Northrup, Detroit Tigers; Alex Delvecchio, Red Wings; Cynthia Canty, WNIC; Joe Gagnon, Appliance Doctor; Tom Carney and Roger Bukema, outdoor writers for the Oakland Press; Bob Talbert, Free Press columnist; Roger Weber, Channel 4; David Scott and Anyre Makupson, Channel 60.

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A big treat during the event will be a silent auction during

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The Farmington Observer

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