

# Growing up

## Kids tell how it is in oratorical contest

"Growing Up in Today's World" was the topic of this year's oratorical contest for students throughout the Farmington area, sponsored by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Breakfast Optimist Club.

Thirteen girls and five boys delivered their speeches March 1 and 8 to a large gathering of Optimist Club members, parents, teachers, principals and essay contest judges. Students from Warner, Dunckel, Power middle schools and from Lanigan, Gill, Hillside, Eagle and Wooddale elementary took part in this year's contest.

Megan Nestor and Jake Shearer from Warner Middle School took top honors in their respective divisions. Megan and Jake will represent the Farmington area at the next level of competition, to be held Saturday, April 8, at Abbott Middle School in West Bloomfield. Students from all over the state will be competing for a \$1,500 scholarship to the school of their choice.

First and second runners-up in the girls division were Catherine Munaco and Kelly Hart from Dunckel Middle School. In the boys division, first and second runners-up were Michael Lieberman and Amer Afaneh, also from Dunckel.

The topic gave students the opportunity to speak about what it is like growing up in today's world. Their speeches talked about how it is not easy being a kid today and the influence the media has on today's youth along with how technology will help define this generation of children.

Serious issues facing society, such as violence, smoking, drinking and drugs, were described by many as the biggest problems facing young people. Religious freedom, working together and technology were listed as some of the positive influences compared to past generations. Students were judged on originality, poise, content, delivery, presentation and overall effectiveness.

Judges for the contest were Farmington Observer reporter Tim Smith, Farmington Board of Education President Priscilla Brouillet and Northwest Gazette editor Dell Cassia.

"It was very difficult to narrow the field down," Smith said. "We (the judges) were impressed by their originality and enthusiasm and with just how perceptive these youngsters are."

The other students taking part in the essay contest were:

■ Girls division: Alese Bagdon, Power Middle School; Lindsey Branch, Warner Middle School; Marc Goodman, Hillside Elementary School; Kamayani Gupta, Wooddale Elementary School; Jessica Kallgren, Power Middle School; Katie Larson, Eagle Elementary School; Tiffany Luse, Hillside Elementary School; Emily Moses, Power Middle School; Lauren Ranckey, Lanigan Elementary School; and Marisa Ventura, Lanigan Elementary School.

■ Boys division: Chris Hadley, Lanigan Elementary School; and Aditya Sarvesh, Gill Elementary School.

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Breakfast Optimist Club supports many notable youth projects by providing donations to a wide variety of local organizations, which go to support programming and opportunities for young people in the community. The club's guiding motto is "Friend of Youth."

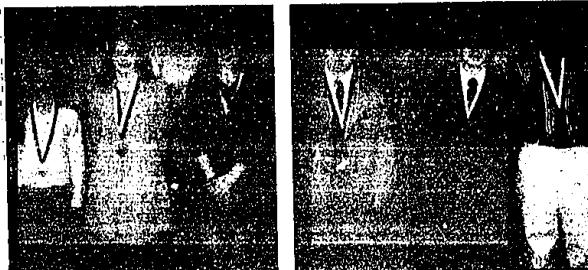
The oratorical contest is just one of the special programs the club sponsors. The club meets every Wednesday morning from 7:30-8:30 a.m. at the San Marino Golf Course. Anyone interested in the club can contact president Leon Kohls at 477-4222.

### Eleven Pines is topic

The Council of Homeowners Associations will host Steve Kitler of the Department of Environmental Quality who will talk about the Eleven Pines project at a general membership meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 21 in the lower level conference room at the Farmington Hills library on 12 Mile.

The city council will discuss Eleven Pines at a study session at 6:30 tonight at the Costick Center.

■ The oratorical contest is just one of the special programs the Optimist Club sponsors.



**Division winners:** Megan Nestor of Warner Middle School (left) captured first place in the girls division of the Optimist Oratorical Contest; first runner-up is Catherine Munaco (second from left); second runner-up Kelly Hart, both students at Dunckel Middle School. Boys division winners are first-place winner Jake Shearer of Warner Middle School (left); first runner-up Michael Lieberman (second from left) and second runner-up Amer Afaneh, both students at Dunckel Middle School.

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