Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, and Ulster students rewarded for writing about place

HYDE PARK, NY – For the fourth year, students around the Valley have delighted Teaching the Hudson Valley with their impressions of–and feelings about–places in our region. In the coming months many of their poems and essays will be published on THV’s blog. In the meantime, we are pleased to introduce the top-scoring authors in our Writing about Place contest. They will host their classmates as they visit the places they wrote about.

GRADES 1 & 2
Vincent Cheng wrote and drew about the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome. He is a second grader in the English Language Learners class at Overlook Primary School, Arlington Central School District, in Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County. Teacher Lily Cheung shared his work.

GRADES 4 & 5
Charlotte Weinstein, a fifth grader at Mill Road Intermediate School in Red Hook, Dutchess County, wrote a poem about the wallpaper at Olana State Historic Site. Her mom, Lee Gough, inspired her to enter the contest.

MIDDLE SCHOOL
Brian Angevine wrote a hiking adventure tale set in the Catskills, Another Normal Day for the Angevines. An eighth grader at Onteora Middle School in Boiceville, Ulster County, Brian’s teacher, Denise Maltese, submitted his work.

HIGH SCHOOL
Itzel Garcia’s essay describes how visiting Storm King Mountain helped her overcome a fear of heights. She is a junior at Newburgh Free Academy, Newburgh City Schools, Orange County. English teacher Virginia McCurdy encouraged her to enter the contest.

Additional awards made possible by Mount Gulian Historic Site will go to these young poets:

Asa Miller (grade 2, Haldane ES, Haldane CSD, Cold Spring, Putnam County) for The
Other Side of the River about West Point. His mom, Mindy Krazmien, shared the poem.

Ember Reynolds (grade 5, Berea ES, Valley Central Schools, Montgomery, Orange County) for The Hudson River. Her teacher, Amy Van Zanten, encouraged her to submit her poem.

Liliana Rivera (grade 5, Warwick Valley Middle School, Warwick CSD, Orange County) for A Fun Day at Bear Mountain. Her teacher, Danielle Diglio, also inspired past winners.

CONTEST DETAILS A panel looking for evocation of place, a vivacious voice, and mastery of conventions appropriate to each student’s age and development read each student’s essay or poem. Readers included local teachers and non-formal educators, a published poet, a graduate student in technical writing and creative nonfiction, and representatives of the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, NYS DEC’s Hudson River Estuary Program, and THV.

Elementary students were asked to submit poems, while secondary students wrote essays. Writing about places of cultural, historic, or natural significance was eligible for prizes, but all students will receive feedback and have their work considered for publication on THV’s blog.

“It’s always a thrill to hear young people’s perspectives on the many important resources in our region,” said Mark Castiglione, director of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and Greenway Conservancy. “And, it’s heartening to know that area parents and teachers are raising a new generation to care for our cultural, historic, and natural treasures.”

THV sponsors Writing About Place as part of the annual National Day on Writing organized each October by the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Writing Project, and others. Public, private, and homeschooled students throughout the 11-county Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area are eligible to participate.

“Connecting people with parks, historic sites, and other significant places is central to the mission of the National Park Service,” said Sarah Olson, superintendent of the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites, “and as we prepare for NPS’s centennial in 2016 we are even more eager to help students create and share memorable experiences.”

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NEXT CONTEST Details about the 2015 contest will be published on THV’s website, www.TeachingtheHudsonValley.org, in July or August. Entries should be written in September or October and will be due in November.

ABOUT THV Launched in 2003, Teaching the Hudson Valley helps educators and students discover and appreciate the region’s natural, historic, and cultural treasures.

THV programs foster collaboration between schools and informal learning sites, such as museums and historic site, through field trip grants, professional development opportunities, a free on-line collection of K-12 lessons and activities, support, and technical assistance.