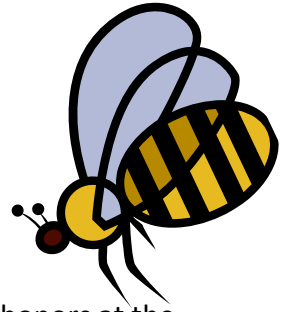


February 4, 2011

SHARP LEARNING CENTER STUDENT WINS COUNTY BEE



Courage Ogie, a seventh-grade student at Sharp Learning Center took home top honors at the 2011 Newton County School System Spelling Bee and will represent the district in the Regional Spelling Bee in Putnam County later this month. Liberty Middle School eighth-grader Breanna Harris was this year's runner-up.

Spelling Bee winners from each elementary and middle school in the county competed in the competition, held at Eastside High School on February 4. After several rounds of competition, the pool was narrowed down to two finalists—Ogie and Harris. Although each had a nervous start in the final phase of the competition—each student misspelled two words (according to Spelling Bee rules, a contestant must correctly spell his or her opponent's misspelled word and then correctly spell their own word in order to win), the two settled down and battled it out for multiple rounds before Harris stumbled on the word, "*conjecture*." At that point, Ogie correctly spelled "*conjecture*" and then won the bee with his correct spelling of the word, "*designate*."

"I was nervous throughout the whole thing," said Ogie, "but it was very exciting."

Although he was nervous, Ogie was still familiar with the pressure of the competition as this wasn't his first trip to the county spelling bee. He represented Ficquett Elementary School in the county competition when he was in fourth grade. Students in grades four through eight are eligible to participate in the spelling bee so Ogie still has one year of eligibility left.

"I didn't really prepare for this one," he admitted. "I was able to sound out words and spell them. It kind of comes naturally. Language Arts is a subject I really like because I love reading and spelling. I am going to study more words before I go to the next bee though. I missed a word that I had never heard before so I know I need to extend my vocabulary. I'm going to get a list of spelling bee words and practice spelling with my friends, teachers, family...anyone who will help me!"



NCSS 2011 Spelling Bee Champion
Courage Ogie will now represent the
school district in the regional
competition in Putnam County on
February 26.



NCSS Spelling Bee Runner-Up Breanna Harris is no stranger to the pressure. This was her second trip to the county Spelling Bee competition!

Although Harris just barely missed earning the top prize, she said she was still happy with her performance.

“I was very nervous but I wanted to be in the spelling bee and see just how far I could go with it,” she said. “I studied words from the Scripps website every day after doing my homework.”

And just like Ogie, she too had prior experience in the county competition. Harris was the alternate competitor from Rocky Plains during fifth grade and competed in the county bee last year as the champion from Veterans Memorial Middle School.

“I’m definitely happy with my performance,” she said. “I had fun.”

As the Newton County winner, Ogie will now represent the school system at the Regional Spelling Bee on February 26, 2011 at 10 a.m. at Putnam County Middle School in Eatonton, Georgia.
