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LIBRARY HOLDS AWARDS CEREMONY FOR TEEN CREATIVE WRITERS

MATTAWAN, MICHIGAN - - - - Van Buren District Library will host the 2017 Van Buren County Teen Creative Writing Challenge Awards Ceremony on Saturday, June 17, 2:00 pm, at the Antwerp Township Meeting Hall, 24821 Front Avenue, Mattawan. This year, 43 writers and artists from Van Buren County and beyond entered the Challenge in the categories of Fiction, Poetry and Cover Art. Each winner receives a cash prize and a copy of a book containing all of the winning entries. The Awards Ceremony, free and open to the public, features readings by the winning writers and a few words from the attending judges.

First place winners are

Grades 11-12

Tommy Otten, Paw Paw, Fiction

Lily Griffioen, Portage, Poetry

Grades 9-10

Sophie Paquin, Mattawan, Fiction

Maddie Vulcano, South Haven, Poetry

Grades 7-8

Yasmin Pirbhai, Kalamazoo, Fiction

Renee Elrod, Bloomingdale, Poetry

Samantha Harmon, Paw Paw, Cover Art

Additional winners include Travis Warren and Donavin Harte of Bangor; Mikayla Chabitch, Hannah Falor and Azabeth Kish of Decatur; Rebekah Dekker of Gobles; Rebecca Leander of Kalamazoo; Ema Somers of Lawton; Adelaide Douglass of Mattawan; Lillian Miller and Zhaquandria Reynolds of Paw Paw; and Joel Reynolds of Plainwell.

Judges selected the winners in a blind reading over a period of four weeks. Judges for the Challenge include award-winning children's historical novelist Janie Lynn Panagopoulos, local poet and Friends of Poetry President Elizabeth Kerlikowske, local graphic novelist Paul Sizer, Western Michigan University professors Meghann Meusen and Bill Brieger, Fire Arts Collaborative Executive Director Allison Kennedy, and Bookbug owner Joanna Parzakonis.

The Challenge is made possible by the partnership of four library systems: Lawton Public Library, Paw Paw District Library, South Haven Memorial Library and Van Buren District Library. Significant funding is provided by the Friends of the Antwerp Sunshine Library, the Friends of the Van Buren District Library, the Friends of the Gobles Library and library patrons.

Van Buren District Library is headquartered in Decatur with branches in Bangor, Bloomingdale, Covert, Gobles, Lawrence and Mattawan.

Decatur * Bangor * Bloomingdale * Covert * Gobles * Lawrence * Mattawan