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PTA Reflections Program Is Currently Underway

Submitted by Rachel Browne and Linda Murphy



Murphy Baker works on an entry at one of the Burton Valley Elementary PTA Reflections Workshops Photo submitted

Each fall, the PTA sponsors the Reflections Program, a fine arts recognition and achievement program designed to encourage children to express their individuality and creativity through various artistic media. This fall, students at Burton Valley, Lafayette, Camino Pablo, Los Perales, and Rheem Elementary Schools and Stanley and Joaquin Moraga Middle Schools have an opportunity to participate in this program. Since late-September, students have been exploring and interpreting this year's theme: "Beauty is . . ."

On Oct. 15, in conjunction with a PTA meeting and Parent Education workshop, Burton Valley Elementary School will host a showcase displaying all entries it receives. It will also showcase the entries at Math Night on Oct. 22.

The value of fine arts in a child's intellectual development has been well documented. The Reflection Program seeks to encourage students to explore and learn about various art forms. Although most entries are submitted in the visual arts category (drawings, paintings, sketches, etc.), many students submit entries in the remaining five categories: literature (poems, stories, etc.), photography, dance choreography, music composition, and film/video production.

Creating art is a valuable learning process that challenges students to use their critical thinking skills as well as their creative talents as they create a piece of art that reflects their interpretation of the chosen theme. Since the program's establishment in 1969, more than ten

million students have participated nationwide.

The goal is to promote art, but Reflections includes a competition in which the entries received will be critiqued against other entries from the same grade division so that outstanding work from the appropriate age and skill level can be recognized. The four grade divisions are: preschool through second grade, third through fifth grade, sixth through eighth grade, and ninth through twelfth grade. The top entries will be advanced to the Las Trampas PTA Showcase, to be held at Walnut Creek Intermediate School on Dec. 6. The top entries from that Showcase are advanced to the District Showcase, which draws entries from all of Contra Costa County. A select few from the county are then advanced to the State Convention where they are again showcased.

Last year, three Burton Valley students had their entries advanced to the District Level Showcase that was held in January: Keily Sarica for visual arts, Marcello Severo for musical composition, and Emmersen Webb for photography. Marcello's composition was then advanced to the State Convention in May, where it received an Award of Merit.

Students interested in participating in Reflections should contact the individual schools for entry forms, rules, and deadlines.

To learn more about Reflections and to view past winners, please see <http://www.capta.org/sections/programs/reflections.cfm>.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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