

## ***Students Compete to Spell Their Way to Washington***

On Feb. 21, 41 spellers from south central Minnesota competed in the South Central Service Cooperative Regional Spelling Bee, a qualifier for the Scripps National Spelling Bee. The participating fifth through eighth grade students had previously won their local bees.

After 47 rounds, the longest bee in SCSC history, Briana Joseph, a seventh-grade student from Fairmont Jr./Sr. High School, was named champion after correctly spelling “cariou” as her championship word.

Joseph was awarded a plaque, spelling supplement, mint coin set, a one-year subscription to Encyclopedia Britannica Online, a one-year subscription to Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online, and travel expenses and accommodations to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

Emily Spieker, an eighth grader from Dakota Meadows Middle School, gave a valiant effort with 27 head to head rounds with Joseph before misspelling “spinosity.”

The top spellers also included third place Jack Nesnidal from Shakopee West Junior High and fourth place Emily Sullivan from Le Sueur-Henderson Middle School. Sullivan exited the bee in round 14 on “azimuth” and Nesnidal erred in his spelling of “lieutenant.”

Other participating schools included: Bridges Community School, Mankato; Butterfield-Odin Schools; Cleveland Public Schools; Comfrey Public School; Eagle View Elementary School, New Prague; Fairmont Elementary; Fairmont Jr./Sr. High School; Falcon Ridge Elementary School, New Prague; Fairmont Elementary School; Granada-Huntley-East Chain Schools; Immanuel Lutheran School, Mankato; Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton; Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial; Loyola Catholic Intermediate, Mankato; Maple River Middle School; Martin County West Junior High; Most Holy Redeemer Catholic School, Montgomery; Mountain Lake Public School; New Prague Middle School; New Ulm Area Catholic Schools; Nicollet Public School; NRHEG Secondary; Oak Crest Elementary, Belle Plaine; Pearson Sixth Grade Center, Shakopee; Prairie Winds Middle School, Mankato; Raven Stream Elementary, New Prague; Shakopee Junior High East; Sleepy Eye Public Schools; Springfield Public Schools; St. Anne’s School, Le Sueur; St. Clair Public Schools; St. John the Baptist Catholic School, Savage; St. John Vianney, Fairmont; St. Paul’s Lutheran, New Ulm; St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran; St. Wenceslaus School, New Prague; TEAM Academy, Waseca; Truman Elementary School; Waterville-Elysian-Morristown; and Windom Middle School.

The SCSC bee was made possible by generous sponsorships from South Central Service Cooperative, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, North Mankato Civic & Commerce Association, The Free Press, New Ulm Kiwanis, Hexico Academic, iStar Financial, Merriam-Webster, Encyclopedia Britannica and Jay Sugarman.

In addition to improving students’ spelling skills and increasing their vocabularies, spelling bee participation provides valuable experience in developing poise—a necessary skill for success in public speaking, performing arts and athletics.