Matilija students win Poetry Contest

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OVN contributor

A crowd of more than 70 family, friends and club members greeted this year's winning poets at the meeting of the Ventura County Writers Club on April 10. Each of the winners read their poems and received their prizes, which was followed by a reception to celebrate and congratulate the winners.

The VCWC 11th annual Poetry Contest drew entries from across America, with two winners in youth categories from out of state —- Rochester, N.Y. and Columbia, Md. In the teen category, students from Matilija Junior High School in Ojai won both top places. First place went to Olivia Adelman, an eighth-grader, and second place was awarded to Kaleigh James, also in the eighth grade. The youngest winner, Juliet Ward, is an 8-year-old from Ventura attending Ventura Charter School.

Other winners represented in the 12 and under category include: fourth-grader Maya Porche of Phoenix Ranch in Simi Valley; fifth-grader Hannah Buch of Bridges Charter in Thousand Oaks; and first-place winner, Elana Luo, a sixth-grader who attends Sycamore Canyon in Newbury Park. The two adult categories were split by sexes, audio visual was won three to two by men, and the adult poetry was the reverse, two men and three women. This was the first year for the audio visual category, drawing a variety of mixed media for the winning entries.

VCWC was formed 79 years ago in Ojai and has held monthly meetings every year since its inception. It currently meets at the Pleasant Valley Senior Center in Camarillo on the second Tuesday of each month, except December. It is an all-volunteer organization. For more information on the Ventura County Writers Club, visit venturacounty writers.com.

Photo submitted

Shown are second-place winner in the Poetry Contest, Kaleigh James, left, with Maggie Westland, VCWC poetry chair, and first-place winner Olivia Adelman.