

SPECIAL EDITION: *EAST TENNESSEE HISTORY DAY DISPATCH*

TEAM TENNESSEE DAY 2: A ROLLER COASTER OF EMOTIONS



Emma Grace Thompson (Left) tests her documentary prior to the beginning of Junior Individual Documentary finals. (Right: from left to right) Maranda Vandergriff and Lydia Taylor just minutes after showing their film on Sequoyah and his syllabary in the Senior Group Documentary category. —All photographs courtesy of William E. Hardy

NHD DAY 2, JUNE 15, 2010

University of Maryland, College Park

The second day of the 2010 Kenneth E. Behring National History Day contest proved to be a roller coaster of emotions for several students on Team Tennessee. The morning session of Day 1 began with two Senior-level documentary films by veteran NHD students. First, Maranda Vandergriff (Powell) and Lydia Taylor (Seymour) showed their film “Talking Leaves: Innovation of the Written Language of the Cherokee Nation.” Vandergriff was a member on a team of middle school students last year that won second place overall in the Junior Group Documentary category. Building on what she learned from last year’s contest in designing a documentary film, Vandergriff, who is homeschooled, teamed with Lydia Taylor for this year’s contest. Vandergriff and Taylor’s film highlights Sequoyah’s innovation of the syllabary and its impact on developing a Cherokee language. Over the course of the past year, Vandergriff and Taylor have spent countless hours researching, interviewing, and developing their film. Along the way, they have met both the principal chiefs of the Eastern and Western bands of the Cherokee, interviewed a descendant of Sequoyah, noted scholars, and collected valuable primary and secondary source materials. Competing at the same time as Vandergriff and Taylor on the opposite end of the University of Maryland campus was Hannah Clevenger (Gatlinburg), whose documentary film on Evelyn Bishop and the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School in Gatlinburg earned a best state project in the senior division and seventh overall in Senior Individual Documentary at last year’s NHD contest. Clevenger’s 2010 film, “Foxfire: Preserving the Past, Changing the Future,” highlighted an educational method pioneered in southern Appalachia in the 1960s.

In the afternoon, several other Tennessee students either showed their documentary film or performed their dramatic performances. These included **performances** by Michelle Woodruff (Etowah--“Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement”); Brandie McConkey (Madisonville--“AC/DC: The Story of Tesla”); Jazmine Houston, Amber Toles, Tierra Collier, and Aliyah Price (Memphis--“The Cotton Gin & Enslaved Workers”); Isaiah Bolden, Helen Shi, Hannah Park, Erin Amlicke, & Elijah Wilson (Nashville--“Vaccination: The Musical”); and **documentaries** by Caroline Rhodes (Lebanon--“The Polio Vaccine: More than a Syringe”); and Brandon Holt & Cindy Ma (Nashville--“The Nashville Sit-Ins: An Innovation in Non-Violent Demonstrations”).

Following the senior level judging, finalists are announced for both documentaries and performances because these two categories require a final round in which the projects must be shown or performed by the students (finals for papers, websites, and exhibits are judged behind closed doors). Students, parents, and teachers gathered in the halls around the University's Student Center's many digital screens to await the posting of finalists. As the finalists were shown, screams of jubilation reverberated throughout the halls while sadness can also be seen and heard. Team Tennessee witnessed disappointment as none of the Volunteer state's projects advanced to the senior level finals to be held Wednesday morning. Several Tennessee students were shocked when they did not see their names on the screens and both parents and other Tennessee students offered words of encouragement.

Twenty-four hours earlier, the same scene played out in the Junior-level division as several students on TEAM Tennessee learned that they would not be advancing to the finals in documentaries and performances. However, in a positive note for TEAM TENNESSEE, Emma Grace Thompson (Coker Creek) saw her name posted on the television screens in the Stamp Union University Center as having advanced to the finals of Junior Individual Documentaries. Before a packed crowd with several standing in the back of the room, Thompson showed her film along with 13 other projects that advanced to the finals. Her film, entitled "Innovation Ends Isolation: The Effect of the Telephone on a Small Appalachian Community," highlights the innovation of the telephone and its impact and change on her own community, which she describes as a small "rustic mountain village settled by the Scotch-Irish in the 1800s." Thompson argues that since its settlement, Coker Creek has remained largely isolated from technological innovations and other amenities. Even today, there is no cellular service available to its residents.

Thompson has an opportunity to earn the third medal in 4 years for Tennessee in the documentary category. In 2007 Caroline Holland of Knoxville won third place for her project on the "Clinton 12" and last year, Miranda Vandergriff, Elisa Vandergriff, and Elijah Gray won second place for their Junior Group Documentary on Dr. Robert F. Thomas, a doctor and minister who practiced in the Gatlinburg/Pittman Center communities. Thompson continues in a tradition of Tennessee students who have enjoyed success at the national contest with local topics.

The Awards Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and will be streamed live on the History Channel website's main page.

DAY 3 Highlights: 9:00 a.m. meeting with Senator Bob Corker on the steps of the U.S. Capitol.

2010 NATIONAL HISTORY DAY PHOTO GALLERY



Brandie McConkey (Madisonville)



Michelle Woodruff (Etowah)

TEAM TENNESSEE: PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

Junior Individual Exhibit

Dillan Edwards (Mountain View Elementary, Etowah) “The Jungle.” **Teacher:** Kimberly Powers.

Tyler Hounshell (New Center Elementary, Sevierville) “Proving the Past: The Impact of Radiocarbon Dating.” **Teacher:** Rebecca Byrd.

Junior Group Exhibit

Caroline Rader & McKynlea Cable (New Center Elementary, Sevierville) “Fight for the Right: The Impact of the 19th Amendment.” **Teacher:** Rebecca Byrd.

Stetson Spain, Patrick Perry, Jesse Holt, and Justin Yates (Jo Byrns Middle School, Cedar Hill) “From the Farmhand to the Farm Machine: Cotton Picking Machine.” **Teacher:** Eric Hagan.

Junior Individual Documentary

Emma Grace Thompson (Homeschool, Coker Creek) “Innovation Ends Isolation: The Effect of the Telephone on a Small Appalachian Community.” **Teacher:** Sharron Thompson.

Miriam Ryburne (Greenway School, Knoxville) for her project on “Peace Through Children: CISV, An Innovation with Global Impact.” **Teacher:** Liz Shugart.

Junior Group Documentary

Sophia Henderson, Graham Hardison, Brandon Babbitt, and Riley Clem (Episcopal School of Knoxville) “Women in the Workforce: How World War II Changed American Women Forever.” **Teacher:** Ellen Petree.

Anne Batcheller & Alexa Ewan (Episcopal School of Knoxville) “The Creation of Labor Laws After the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire.” **Teacher:** Ellen Petree.

Junior Individual Performance

Kiyoko Reidy (Greenway School, Knoxville) “All That Jazz: An American Innovation with an Impact on Music and Culture.” **Teacher:** Liz Shugart.

Junior Group Performance

Ashleanne Zachary and Logan Craig (First Baptist Academy, Knoxville) “Songs of Freedom.” **Teacher:** Darrell Vandergriff.

Junior Website, Individual and Group Combined

Tristan Hightower (Concord Christian School, Knoxville) “The Atomic Bomb Disseminates America’s Position: United States Poised for Victory.” **Teacher:** Tammy Lightholder.

Logan Garrett (Vonore Middle School) “Code Talkers: The Code that Could Not Be Cracked.” **Teacher:** Justin Woody.

Junior Individual Paper

Ruth Simberloff (Greenway School, Knoxville) “In Danger of Extinction: Impact and Innovation of the Endangered Species Act.” **Teacher:** Liz Shugart.

Abby Huber (Greenway School, Knoxville) “The Montessori Method: An Innovation in Education.” **Teacher:** Liz Shugart.

Senior Individual Exhibit

Caitlyn Sundkamp (Walden Home School, Signal Mountain) “A Matter of Time: John Harrison’s Sea Clocks.”

Teacher: Linda Neuhoff.

Jeremy Meister (First Assembly Christian School, Cordova) “It came Like a Flash of Lightning- The Innovation of Nikola Tesla.” **Teacher:** Scott Johnson.

Senior Group Exhibit

Sarah Stokely, Jessi Reed, and Katie Caughron (Cocke County High School, Newport) “The Cotton Gin.”

Teacher: Clay Blazer.

Celeste McAlpin-Levitt, Rebekah Rhea, Katie Smith, and Madeline Stinnett (West High School, Knoxville) “Still Standing: Leg Braces and AFO’s.” **Teacher:** Candace Greer.

Senior Individual Documentary

Hannah Clevenger (Gatlinburg-Pittman High School, Gatlinburg) “Foxfire: Preserving the Past, Changing the Future.” **Teacher:** Rebecca Byrd.

Caroline Rhodes (Lebanon High School, Lebanon) “The Polio Vaccine: More than a Syringe.” **Teacher:** Carrie Pfeiffer.

Senior Group Documentary

Maranda Vandergriff & Lydia Taylor (Homeschool, Powell) “Talking Leaves: Innovation of the Written Language.” **Teacher:** Katie Vandergriff & Lisa Taylor.

Brandon Holt & Cindy Ma (Martin Luther King Magnet- Pearl High School, Nashville) “The Nashville Sit-Ins: An Innovation in Non-Violent Demonstrations.” **Teacher:** Fred Artibee.

Senior Website, Individual and Group Combined

Robert Hernandez & Gary Moats (Polk County High School, Benton) “Lights, Camera, Action: The Impact of Television on Society.” **Teacher:** Dewey Esquinance.

Jason Van der Merwe (Homeschool, Knoxville) “The Proximity Fuze: A Killer Innovation Which Saved Lives.” **Teacher:** Meryl Van der Merwe.

Senior Individual Paper

Thalia Spinrad (University School of Nashville) “Scientology in the 1950s & 1960s: The Creation of the First Perpetually Changing Religious Doctrine.” **Teacher:** Pat Miletich.

Savannah Lockwood (West High School, Knoxville) “The Electric Chair: Sparks of Controversy.” **Teacher:** Candace Greer.

Senior Individual Performance

Michelle Woodruff (McMinn Central High School, Etowah) “Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement.” **Teacher:** Teri Blair.

Brandie McConkey (Sequoyah High School, Madisonville) “AC/DC: The Story of Tesla.” **Teacher:** Lance McConkey.

Senior Group Performance

Jazmine Houston, Amber Toles, Tierra Collier, and Aliyah Price (Ridgeway High School, Memphis) “The Cotton Gin & Enslaved Workers.” **Teacher:** Nancy Parrish.

Isaiah Bolden, Helen Shi, Hannah Park, Erin Amlicke, & Elijah Wilson (Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet- Pearl High School, Nashville) “Vaccination: The Musical.” **Teacher:** Fred Artibee.