

West Central 6th-grader wins with 'abyss'

Rome City Schools' champion will advance to district spelling bee

 By Kristina Wilder

Staff Writer

KWilder@RN-T.com

 02.08.17



Cai Sabino

After 20 rounds and more than an hour of competition, Kathy Truong, West Central Elementary sixth-grader, won the 2017 Rome City Schools Spelling Bee.

Seven winners and seven alternates from each elementary school and the middle school in the system participated in the bee at the central office Tuesday morning.

Words that caused the champion spellers some problems included "paradox," "quench" and "tsunami."

The winning word was "abyss," which Kathy spelled after four back-and-forth rounds with runner-up Cai Sabino. The two battled it out after more than an hour of spelling and vocabulary rounds.

"This is mind-blowing for me," Kathy said. "Last time I was here in fourth grade, I lost pretty quickly."

Kathy said spelling has always been something that is easy for her, but she did spend time going over words with her older sister to practice.

Kathy will now advance to the district bee, which will be Feb. 25 at 10 a.m. at Georgia Highlands College.

West Central literacy coach Jennifer Uldrick said the school staff is looking forward to welcoming the Spelling Bee banner back to the school.

"It is awesome to be bringing it back," she said. "We had it about three years ago and the spot is still there. We will be proud to have it and we are extremely proud of Kathy. She was cool as a cucumber the whole time."

Uldrick was keeping West Central Principal Leslie Dixon updated throughout the bee, she said.

"When I texted her that Kathy won, I got a lot of exclamation points in reply," she laughed.

Runner-up Cai was not too nervous, he said.

"I winged it," he said, smiling. "The words in the final rounds between the two of us made me nervous, because they were tougher."

Cassie Parson, literacy coordinator for Rome City Schools and moderator of the bee, said she feels the bee is a positive event for students.

"I think it helps as far as understanding spelling rules, vocabulary," she said.



Kristina Wilder/Rome News-Tribune

Bee judges Esther Vaughn (from left), Tod Wheeler and Stephanie Graves wait for Tuesday's competition to begin.



Kristina Wilder/Rome News-Tribune

Kathy Truong, a student at West Central Elementary, is the winner of the Rome City Schools Spelling Bee.

