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## Tabatowski spells 'pyromaniac' to win city schools' spelling bee

By TONYA SHIPLEY  
City Editor

ZANESVILLE - Michael Tabatowski grinned and laughed as the announcer gave him the word to spell - "pyromaniac."

He wasn't laughing because he thought the word humorous, but because he knew it would be the final word in the Zanesville City Schools Annual District-Wide Spelling Bee. The event was held Tuesday evening at Roosevelt Middle School.

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two years ago and fourth last year.

"I knew I won because I knew how to spell it," said Tabatowski, 12, a seventh-grader at St. Nicholas Catholic School.

With his win, Tabatowski earned a spot in the statewide spelling bee, which will be held March 25. He expects to start studying for it soon.

Tabatowski's family sat in the audience on pins and needles as he spelled each word correctly. He is hardly a rookie in the event, having placed third



TREVOR JONES/Times Recorder

St. Nicholas Catholic School seventh-grader Michael Tabatowski correctly spells 'sequin' during the final round of the Zanesville City Schools District-Wide Spelling.

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He is the son of Tom and Kathy Tabatowski.

The spelling bee started out with a round where eight of the 18 contestants were eliminated on words like "nozzle," "expensive," "fatality" and "forestry." Some of the students added extra letters or couldn't navigate the end of the words after nailing the first part.

It took only four rounds before only two were left -Tabatowski and Daniel Wells, a seventh-grader at Grover Cleveland Middle School.

Wells has also participated in the spelling bee in the past.

He said he wasn't nervous.

"If you are nervous, you don't spell as well," Wells said.

He misspelled "sequin," which Tabatowski then had to spell correctly before he was given "pyromaniac."

As she was sitting on stage, Emily Kappes, a fourth-grader from Westview Elementary, would spell the other contestants' words in her head.

She admitted she was nervous almost from the start.

"(I was nervous) right when I got on to stage," she said.

Kappes' studying paid off as she lasted until misspelling "agnostic."

All the students who participated were greeted with encouraging words from family members as they stepped off the stage no matter what round they went out in.

The winners all received trophies and St. Nicholas School received a giant trophy to be displayed at the school until next year's spelling bee.

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