



1808 Route Six • Carmel, NY 10512 • (845) 225-2700 • Fax: (845) 225-3207 • www.PFCSinc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 15, 2011

Contact: Cheryl McKeever
845.225.2700 x136
cmckeever@PFCSinc.org

PUTNAM SPELLS “CHAMPION” FoMPL

Friends of Mahopac Public Library team wins first place at PFCS Spelling Bee fundraiser

Brewster, NY – On Thursday, April 14, more than 170 people gathered at the Starr Ridge Banquet Center in Brewster for Putnam Family & Community Services (PFCS)’s Adult Spelling Bee Team Championship. 21 teams competed, made up of local businesses, organizations, and community members looking to have fun for a good cause; all proceeds of the Spelling Bee, which totaled over \$7,000, will benefit the mental health and chemical dependency treatment programs of PFCS.

After 11 rounds of increasingly difficult words, and a lot of good-natured competition and rivalry, 4 teams advanced to the Championship Round. Soon, only the Friends of Mahopac Public Library team – the “Friendly Bees” – and “Sit Stay Spell” from event sponsor South Putnam Animal Hospital remained. Announcers Bill Hammond of Edward Jones and singer/songwriter Cat Guthrie called out the final word, *austausch*, and a hush fell over the crowd as they waited to see who would take home the trophy. Each team submitted their answers...and the room erupted in applause as the Friendly Bees were declared the champions.



Spelling Champs: The “Friendly Bees” of Friends of Mahopac Public Library – Andrew DeStefano, Tom Honohan, Sheelagh Kaplan, Susan Grant, Mary Ellen DiRaffaele, and Lisa Akker.

Andrew DeStefano from the Friends team climbed onto his chair, displaying his correctly spelled word for all to see. “This is outstanding! I haven’t felt this good in years,” said DeStefano. He credited the win to spelling practice and close collaboration with team members Lisa Akker, Susan Grant, and Tom Honohan. Routing the spellers on to victory were team cheerleaders Mary Ellen DiRaffaele and Mahopac Library Assistant Director Sheelagh Kaplan.

PFCS Executive Director Diane Russo congratulated the winners and acknowledged everyone who participated in the Spelling Bee. “We had such a great crowd tonight. Between the team names, the cheerleaders, the costumes – everyone had a blast! And more importantly, it’s a fun way for people to make a difference in the community. Every dollar we raise tonight will help our neighbors recover from mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction.” Added Russo, “I especially want to thank the volunteers and sponsors who made the Spelling Bee possible.”

Sponsors of the event include: Honey Bee Sponsor – South Putnam Animal Hospital; and Bumble Bee Sponsors – Carmel Rotary, Comcast, Kristin M. Burke, Edward Jones – William Hammond, and LocalPutnam.com – Christine Torino.

About Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc.

Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc. (PFCS) is a private non-profit agency providing mental health, chemical dependency treatment and prevention, and family support services to people of all ages, regardless of ability to pay. PFCS promotes opportunities to grow, heal, and recover through comprehensive services including counseling, case management, family advocacy, community outreach, and assistance with addiction and rehabilitation. For more information, visit www.PFCSinc.org.