

4th-graders learn finances through piggy bank project

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

During the week of April 22-26, fourth-grade students at Holyoke Elementary School participated in a Piggy Bank Contest sponsored by CSU Extension in cooperation with First Pioneer National Bank of Holyoke.

Anytime is a great time to talk to children about money and how to manage it. However, with April being Financial Literacy Month and the week of April 22 being “Teach your Child to Save Week,” what better time to team up with teachers to bring this important topic to light for students?

Fourth-grade teachers Nicole Churchwell and Tarah Kasdorf were gracious supporters, allowing CSU Extension and First Pioneer to partner with them to provide curriculum and incentives to 46 students throughout the week.

The contest began with the art teacher, Christina Martinez, lending her artistic hand in helping the students begin to decorate their pre-made piggy banks donated by CSU Extension. The students were challenged by First Pioneer National Bank to decorate their banks to follow the theme of “Happy 125th Birthday, Holyoke.”



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Fourth-grade winners of the Piggy Bank Contest are pictured, from left, with their prizes and their award-winning banks, front row, Erick Marroquin, Anthony Soriano and Ashley Rahe; and back row, Giselle Prieto, Faviola Jareth Gardea and Perla Olivas.□□

—Enterprise photo

With the banks looking colorfully festive, they were taken over to the high school for the melodrama, “Shawnee Lou, the Prairie’s Purest Dressmaker,” on Wednesday, April 24. Attendees of the play were supportive of the project and the students as they put spare change into the top three banks as they so chose.

The money in all of the banks was then tallied and totaled to determine the top three winners in each fourth-grade class. The money will go toward something for the fourth-grade class.

As students were decorating their banks, each day they also were working through a story about how, Pig E. Bank and his friends, Greg Hopper and Ann Tee, learned how to set goals, create a budget, find income and save money to achieve that goal.

The piggy bank primers students used came from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Mo. for free. In addition, the Federal Reserve Bank provided informational booklets to parents in English and Spanish to help them start and support the conversation about money at home.

Tracy Roll of First Pioneer Bank talked to students about interest and saving money in a bank versus saving at home. She also invited students to participate in three upcoming contests sponsored by the bank to win more prizes.

Students were also asked to do a pre-assessment and post-assessment, including various

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terms and behaviors surrounding finance and money to see if behavior changes and learning had occurred.

All of the prize money was donated by First Pioneer National Bank. Student banks were put on display at the local bank to share with the community.

Third-place winners received a \$5 prize; second-place winners, a \$10 prize; and first-place winners, a \$25 First Pioneer CD.

Ashley Rahe earned a first-place finish in the fourth-grade 4A class and Erick Marroquin took first place in the 4B class. The second-place winner for 4A was Giselle Prieto while Faviola Jareth Gardea took second in 4B. Anthony Soriano placed third in 4A and Perla Olivas finished in third in 4B.

All participants received a gold dollar coin. The fourth-grade class collected a total of \$58.94 to put towards classroom fun or classroom materials from a voting process.

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