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## Teen-run Arts Contest celebrates its fifth year

By Charlie Keohane



Top row, from left: Jonah Kunis, Ella Easley, Naama Elhasid, Ethan Sawyer, Katrina Ortman, Ella Thompson, and Meredith Levandowski; bottom row: Stella Bobrowsky, Claudia Cruse, Aubrey Fitzsimmons, and Emma Uffelman. Photo Tim Keohane

contest. For the teens running the contest, it's all about promoting arts, boosting the confidence of budding artists, and bringing a sense of community to Lafayette. They are excitedly anticipating the sixth annual contest, which will open Nov. 12 later this year. LYAS is always looking for more motivated volunteers to assist contest duties, and interested teenagers can find more information at [www.lyas.org](http://www.lyas.org).

This contest relies completely on the support from sponsors in the community, notably the Rotary Club and Lori Legler of Alain Pinel Realty.

The LYAS contest is the only Lafayette writing and photography contest open exclusively to middle schoolers. For more information about the contest and to see all the winning stories and photographs visit [www.lyas.org](http://www.lyas.org).

After months of waiting, a dozen eager middle schoolers and their family members gathered in the Lafayette Library's Community Hall in April to claim their prizes in a local writing and photography contest.

The fifth annual contest was put on by the Lafayette Youth Arts Society, an organization run completely by teenagers who are passionate about promoting the arts in Lafayette. The contest ran from Nov. 13 to Jan. 31, attracting dozens of students and had about 200 entries. The contest is open to all middle schoolers living or attending school in Lafayette. Students choose one of five prompts and then are free to start snapping photos or writing their stories.

Local writers and photographers generously donated their time to judge the entries anonymously, before 18 kids were awarded prizes. This year, prizes included checks up to \$100, books, and gift cards to local businesses such as Chipotle and Susie Cakes.

The small but dedicated group of teenagers spend months fundraising, promoting, and organizing the

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