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Two Elgin High School Juniors

Winners Named for "Clockwatch Review" Young Writers' Awards

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Two Elgin (Ill.) High School juniors were named winners of the 1993 "Clockwatch Review" Young Writers Awards, co-sponsored by the award-winning arts journal and the Illinois Wesleyan University Writers' Conference.

Laura Schock and Sherry Sullivan--whose teacher, Carol Morrison, edits the literary magazine, "Bluff City"--were chosen from among 68 entries that came from 25 communities across Illinois.

The contest, open to Illinois' writers, ages 14-18, provides the winners with an opportunity to study, tuition-free, at the IWU Writers' Conference, Aug. 1-6, with established talents such as Phyllis Barber, James Cross Giblin, Ralph Burns, and Bill Nelson.

Barber is the author of five books, including "And the Desert Shall Blossom," for which she received first prize in the Utah Fine Arts Literary Competition (novel category). Giblin, an editor for 34 years, has been associated with Clarion Books for children since 1967 as editor-in-chief, vice president, editor, and publisher; he received the 1983 American Book Award for "Chimney Sweeps: Yesterday and Today." Burns--the author of three books of poetry, "Mozart's Starling," "Any Given Day," and "Us"--teaches at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, and edits the literary journal, "Crazyhorse;" he has received two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships and won the 1983 Great Lakes Colleges Association Award for the best first book in poetry. Nelson is a feature writer and copy editor of "Wisconsin," the Sunday magazine of the Milwaukee Journal and teaches at Alverno College and the University of Wisconsin Extension; he has received the Christopher Latham Sholes Award for teaching excellence from the Council for Wisconsin Writers.

This year's judge, Sue Ponsford, assistant editor at "Clockwatch Review," said that Schock's story, "Driving into the Darkness," has a strong, believable voice and carefully developed prose. It is a story of two girls who escape briefly from their troubled lives via a late-night trip to Chicago.

Of Sullivan's poetry, the judge noted that while many of her poems treat common subjects, such as young love, she uses simple, yet strong words to create poetry out of real life. "Sullivan knows how to craft a poem rather than simply put it down on paper."

This is the fourth year that the statewide writing contest has been held. Unlike most contests, this one requires no reading fee. "Only promising young writers profit," said "Clockwatch Review" editor James Plath, whose journal was one of five honored in 1990 as one of the best by the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses. Plath is an IWU assistant professor of English.

The Writers' Conference, in its 17th year, features daily classes and workshops in fiction, poetry, non-fiction, and writing for children and youth. Two instructors evaluate and hold individual manuscript conferences with participants.

For conference information, contact Bettie Wilson Story, director, 309/828-5092.