

LEARNING

Children's author visits Thompson school

GARANT'S NEWEST BOOK IS 'I'M GONNA WIN'

BY RICH HOSFORD
VILLAGER STAFF WRITER

THOMPSON — Fourth-grade students filed into the school library, not to read a book, but to meet an author who writes them.

Andre Garant, author of children's books, took time out of his day to visit fourth-grade students at Thompson's Mary R. Fisher Elementary School Friday, April 30.

Garant, who has been writing for 10 years, has published 17 books. His first, "I'm Gonna Win," is a story about Matthew Casey, a talented but stubborn 11-year-old basketball player who gets upset when he doesn't get the position he wants. His temper gets the best of him, and eventually the coach asks him to leave the team. Casey must learn how to play well with others and become part of a team. The story started Garant on a series of sports-related stories, all complete with a moral pertinent to his young audience. Garant has also written about school field trips, family vacations and children putting on a circus — anything he believes will reach his audience.

Garant said his mission is to get children, especially boys, who generally read less than their female classmates, to fall in love with reading. He chooses his subjects based on what children respond to in an attempt to draw them in and keep them reading.

"My basic message to the children is to keep on reading as much as possible," Garant said. "I write books that they'll be interested in — I try to draw them in."

Garant said his books are aimed at children in the fourth and fifth grades. When he started out, he said, he tried to write for older children but found that many of them had lost interest in reading.

"Fourth-graders are old enough to appreciate what I write, but young enough to be inter-



Rich Hosford photo

Children's book author Andre Garant speaks to fourth-graders at Mary R. Fisher Elementary School.

ested," he said. "I want to hook them at 10 and keep them reading. If I can capture their attention at that level, I consider my mission met."

Garant also said he enjoys meeting with children in this age group, and his writing has provided him many opportunities to visit

schools and meet with his readers. A Connecticut resident, he said he has visited schools throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts and spoken to thousands of children, and the response, especially from fourth-graders, has almost always been encouraging.

"They give tremendous feedback," he said. "They are young enough to be insightful but also completely honest."

Garant, 41, did not always know he wanted to become an author. He is an accountant by profession and only started writing after he enrolled in a home study course he came across in a magazine on writing. He studied under a professional author and was soon working on his first book. Though he still works as an accountant manager, writing is his hobby and his passion. He said he got into writing because he enjoys it, not to make money. During his talk with the students, he used his own story as an example to encourage them to pursue their interests, whether or not they believe they can achieve success.

"If there is something you really want to do, go out and do it," he said. "I believe you can do anything you want."

Following his talk in Thompson, Garant said he was impressed by the students at Mary R. Fisher. When asked how he felt the talk went and how receptive the students were, he said it was "unbelievable."

"I visit a lot of towns and it's always hard to know what kind of reception you'll get," he said. "The response in Thompson was one of the best I ever have. It gave me a good feeling to know the kids connected with me. It was one of the best school visits I've ever had."

Garant's other books include "Nick Makes the Kick," "Reilly's Black Belt," "Florida Vacation" and "The Circus Kids." His next book, titled "Jake's Tree House," will be out in August of this year.

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TOURTELLOTTE MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

THIRD QUARTER HONOR ROLL:

GRADE 9

High honors: Kaelin Andersen, Sabrina Benton, Lauren Biernacki, Stephen Chlapowski, Julia Eddy, Natalia Gil, Sage King, Julie Kopacz, Matthew Lubomirski, Kevin Poitras, Ashley Stanley, Samantha Vear and Briana Wrubleski.

Honors: Shane Alexander, Michael Benkowski, Halle Danielson, Kimberly Fafard, Julianne Faucher, Carissa Lueth, Colyn Petre, Tiffany Preston, Jacob Roy, Nicole Tetreault, Melissa Velez Hilton, Kyle Wilson and Amber Young.

Recognition: Michael Adams, Austin Adamuska, Angela Burgess, Samuel Fontaine, Erika Kopacz, Belle Mayo, Chelsea Patterson, Sean Rondeau, Andrew Santerre and Kayelyn Seiden.

GRADE 10

High honors: Aidan Baranow, Emily Baranow, Emily Blake,

Patrycja Chmielewska, Stephanie Duquette, Brandon Hamilton, Casey Kitka, Kathrin Lewis, Jamie Mason, Elizabeth McKinley, Dalton Piecka, Olivia Rossetti, Miranda Skaradowski, Clay Sosnowski and Katelyn Tupaj.

Honors: Kiyara Brissette, Morgan Brissette, Kailey Cassidy, Francesca Coppellotti, Jenelle Davidson, Danielle De'Lay, Adriana Dufresne, Jacob Eddy, Kathleen Errichetti, Rebecca Fasshauer, Kathrine Feranzoviz, Joel Jezieski, Cordell Kenneson, Jessica Mason, McKayla Murphy, Izabela Niebylski and Koryne Philbrook.

Recognition: Brandon Blanchard, Nicole Caron, Devyn Daviau, Edward Kopacz, Tamara Lafontaine, Frances LeBlanc, Tyler Limoes, Caitlin McMenemy, Bella Moulton, Cody Picard, Tyla Potvin, Amanda Skeens, Felicia Torres, Andrew Trudo and Kylie

White.

GRADE 11

High honors: Stefanie Faucher, Stephanie Girouard, Andrew Gity, Nikki Gyftopoulos, Marie Jezierski, Ryan King, Rachel Kopacz, Emily MacKenzie, Amanda Quatrocelli, Jarrett Thomas, Stephanie Vogel and Caterina Wilson.

Honors: Rae Anderson, Alyssa Bond, Heather Bruyere, Lauren Danielson, Alysha Dickson, Ryan Gendreau, Shane Gleim, Noel Hall, Wellesley Kosak, Christopher Leveille, Jocelyn Sabourin, David Santerre, Donald Scanlon, Robert Silva II, Andrew Standrowicz and Victoria Szamocki.

Recognition: Haley Anderson, Kyle Beaulieu, John Caio, Niles Deary, Laura Durand, William O'Brien, Alyson Santerre, Jillian Schelhammer, Ian Sullivan and Bryan Young.

GRADE 12

High honors: Ashley Anderson, Sarah Corrado, Danielle Dion, Amanda Mathieu, Morgan Pellecchia, Alexandria Tetreault and Riley Williams.

Honors: Dorothy Biron, Sarah Bordua, Kelsey Carpenter, Emily Carr, Kenzie Cournoyer, Katlyn Deslauriers, Shana Gaboury, Abby Gould, Nolan Grant, Andrew Johnson, Alexandra Keefe, Amanda Kenefick, Brett Kenneson, Stephanie Lewis, Chelsea Mellen, Marissa Mungham, Daniel Petre Jr., Stephanie Pratt, Katelynn Rogers, John Sullivan III, Caitlin Trudell, Nicole Withers and Rebecca Witkowski.

Recognition: Jena Audette, John Brown, Nicole Duquette, Nicholas Fierro, Justin Girouard, Brittany Mae Kruzell, Kyle Kusek, Patrick Leclerc, Sydney Padula, Camden Svec, Ricardo Torres, Kelly Violette and Matthew Wolak.



St. Joseph School

Monday, May 17: Hot dog in a bun, baked fries, pickles, dessert.

Tuesday, May 18: Build a sub with ham, turkey, salami, bologna, cheese and pickles; potato chips; dessert.

Wednesday, May 19: American chop suey, tossed salad, bread and butter, dessert.

Thursday, May 20: Pizza with assorted toppings, veggies and dip, dessert.

Friday, May 21: Chicken and gravy over rice, green beans, bread and butter, dessert.

Ellis Tech

Monday, May 17: Hot dogs in a bun (2), baked fries, fruit, milk.

Tuesday, May 18: Chicken and rice, vegetable blend, fruit, milk.

Wednesday, May 19: Shortened day.

Thursday, May 20: Sloppy Joe on a roll, corn, fruit, milk.

Friday, May 21: Cheese pizza, salad, fruit, milk.