

THE WILCOX FOUNDATION ANNUAL ESSAY CONTEST - 2012

**“Dedicated to the belief in education -
desiring to encourage learning about the History of Plymouth”**

-Providing Academic Scholarships To Plymouth and Canton Students-

Essay Theme

December 7, 2011 marks the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. As a direct result of this attack, the United States declared war on Japan and thus entered World War II. Your essay should focus on how this historic day, and the events that followed, affected the lives and businesses in Plymouth. The primary aim of your research paper should not be about battle stories, but rather how the residents of Plymouth responded to the war experience. War Bonds, Red Cross blood drives, war victims' relief drives, victory gardens and product rationing are examples of topics that may provide ideas for your essay. Personal interviews with local women who worked in plants to help the war effort, family members of those who were lost in the war or surviving World War II veterans would be especially helpful in developing your essay. The Plymouth Historical Museum and Plymouth District Library, especially the Plymouth Mail microfilm collection, would be good places to conduct initial background research.

Sam Hudson's *The Story of Plymouth Michigan* may be used for background information, **but must not be quoted or cited as a resource.**

Hints For A Successful Essay

The purpose of this essay contest is to encourage students to become historians as they develop their essays. Learning history can be exciting and challenging if students become participants in the whole process of “doing” history. Learning to be a historian involves much more than simply reading textbooks in the classroom.

Anyone can do research and write about it, but certain guidelines and standards must be followed to produce “good” written history.

Historians must:

- Be resourceful in searching for and examining all kinds of information.
- Locate a wide variety of sources.
- Establish the relationship between people, places and events.
- Recognize the different points of view which the past and present offer.
- Present their research to the judging panel.

How To Find Information And Resources

The first task of a historian is to find a great deal of information about the topic. One of the best ways to make research easier is to choose a topic that relates to family and/or experience in the community or a topic which greatly interests

you. Local resources for historical topics include:

- The Plymouth Library or the Canton Library
- The Plymouth Historical Museum
- Interviews with people in the community who know about topics of interest.
- The Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library.
- Newspapers' archives which may be available on the internet or at the Historical Museum
- The Wayne County Registrar of Deeds Office for ownership history of a property.
- The Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing.
- Census Records.

historical

Plymouth

property.

General Rules

You must be a high school senior residing in the Plymouth/Canton School District.

Your essay must be submitted no later than Thursday, March 1, 2012.

Award winners will be notified by phone followed by a letter.

Students who reside in the Plymouth/Canton School District and who attend either Canton, Plymouth or Salem High School should submit their essays to the Counseling Office at Salem High School.

Students who reside in the Plymouth/Canton School District but who attend a school other than Canton, Plymouth or Salem High School may submit their essays to Win Schrader, c/o Salem High School, Counseling Office, 46181 Joy Road, Canton, Michigan, 48187.

The essay length is to be between 5 and 10 pages. Pages are to be numbered. The title of your essay is to appear at the top of the first page of your essay. Notes, captions, supplemental/appendix materials, annotated bibliography, illustrations, names of any interviewees, and the cover page do not count in the total. The essay must be typed or computer printed with type size of either 11 or 12 points, double spaced, on standard 8.5" by 11" white paper.

Citations including footnotes and end notes are required. Footnotes and end notes need not be placed on each page, but may be added as a group at the end of the essay/research paper.

Any essay of minimum length which evidences incomplete effort will be rejected by the judges.

Your name is to appear on the cover page only. Prior to judging, the cover page will be removed and a number will be assigned to each essay. This will prevent the judges from knowing any participant's name and will insure impartial judging. An example of the required cover page is included.

Since this essay contest is not based on prior academic performance, please DO NOT attach a copy of your school grades transcript.

Submit four (4) copies of your essay.

For questions, contact Mr. Schrader by mail at the above address, or e-mail at winschrader@earthlink.net.

Criteria For Judging

The essay should be written using standard formal English.

Originality, creativity, accuracy in use of supporting data, organization, sentence structure, spelling, punctuation and capitalization will all be considered in the judging. However, judges will weigh the depth of research and its resulting application to the theme of the essay, originality of thought, creativity and expression above the mechanics of the composition.

It is important to note, however, that the judges will not be looking for the most scholarly written or academically superior paper. The primary idea behind this program is to encourage students to discover the tools available for historical research and to participate in a project that will give the student insight into the history of the Plymouth area.

Accordingly, a great deal of weight will be given to the effort made to locate illuminating resources and complete information from those sources. Judges will be looking for evidence that the student discovered information and learned about Plymouth's history. Research conducted solely using the internet will not be considered utilizing multiple sources nor to be hands-on research.

While on-line research is useful, one of the objectives of the essay contest is to introduce students to historical documents and hands-on research so that they can get a personal flavor or sense of old records. Accordingly, this year, the judges will give extra consideration to hands-on research. In additions to "Citations" as described above, students should specifically indicate all sources or records where an in-person physical review of documents occurred.

Information drawn directly from Sam Hudson's well known books about the history of Plymouth is not to be used, quoted or referenced in your essay.

Certain special situations may occur which will require the individual attention of the judging committee. Such situations will be considered on a case by case basis. The decision of the judges will be final.

Judges will assign value using the following guidelines:

Discovery and use of multiple sources/resources.	40 points
Use of supporting data to develop the paper.	20 points
Does the essay follow the General Rules?	10 points
Is the topic consistent with the rules?	10 points
Appearance, organization, spelling.	10 points
Originality, creativity.	10 points

Scholarship Awards

All essays will be judged in one group. Based on the quality of each essay, each essay will receive either a First Place, Second Place or Random Draw designation. First Place is \$2,000.00, Second Place is \$1,500.00, and Random Draw* is \$1,000.00. The maximum amount of Scholarship Awards that will be awarded will not exceed \$26,000.00. The Scholarship Awards must be used for post high school educational purposes. The scholarships are not renewable.

*After the First Place and Second Place winners are selected, the essays from those remaining will be selected, at random by a "blind" draw, and will be the Random Draw winners.

The scholarships will be formally presented at the Awards Night at each recipient's high school.