

COCHISE
Cowboy Poetry
& MUSIC GATHERING

August 16, 2018

Dear Teachers / School Coordinator,

The Cochise Cowboy Poetry and Music Gathering (CCPMG) is a non-profit organization focused on preserving and perpetuating our cowboy legacy. We host a Gathering of poets and musicians each February to celebrate this heritage. We will be celebrating our 27th Gathering on February 8 and 9, 2019.

As in the past, our youth component, the Western Heritage Schools Outreach Program (WHSOP), would like to partner with you to promote literacy and personal growth. The program is designed to encourage all students in Grades 3 through 12 to learn western history and culture, write poetry, and enter their poem into our poetry contest. For those student poets selected as among the best, an additional goal is to recite their winning poem from memory to an audience at The Gathering. Our success, past and future, is due to your support!

To engage your students and faculty a WHSOP volunteer is prepared to visit your school and make a poetry presentation on the day of your choosing between now and October 31, 2018. Pick a date, give us a call and we'll make it happen. We offer three levels of presentations depending on your needs: "Just the Facts" (15 minutes), "The Facts plus Cowboy Life" (45 min) or "Let's Talk about Cowboy Poetry" (45 min- 1hour). We are willing to accommodate your busy school schedules by offering presentations to clubs before or after regular school hours. Poems entered into our student poetry contest will be due no later than Nov 9, 2018.

Benefits to you and your students for participating in the Western Heritage Outreach Program and student poetry contest include poetry and western heritage teaching assistance, poetry writing in compliance with Arizona education writing standards, experience in public speaking, and public recognition for your school's excellence. In addition, for schools whose students submit poems to our contest, a visiting artist will perform at your school on February 7 or 8, 2019. Winning students' poems are published in the annual "*Saddlebag of Poems*," and we offer up to five \$1,000.00 scholarships for seniors.

Enclosed are all the materials and information needed to get your students started in our Western Heritage Program and youth poetry contest. Included are list of key events, poetry contest rules, judging criteria, and entry form. This information and more are also available on our official Gathering website at <http://www.cowboypoets.com/> under the Schools tab.

We appreciate your support and engagement. We look forward to hearing from you soon to schedule a school presentation visit.

Sincerely,



Eileen Ahearn

Chair, Western Heritage Schools Outreach Program

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