



May 24, 2017

SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE WELCOMES 291 SPELLERS FOR 90TH YEAR OF PROUD TRADITION

CINCINNATI – The Scripps National Spelling Bee, presented by Kindle, reaches a significant milestone this year — its 90th national bee. Champion spellers, all 291 of them, and their families will converge on the Washington, D.C., area next week to participate and celebrate.

In 1925, 11-year-old Frank Neuhauser correctly spelled *gladiolus* to become the first national champion. The math adds up correctly when one considers that the national finals were suspended due to World War II from 1943-1945.

“The Scripps National Spelling Bee takes great pride in its legacy of excellence,” said Paige Kimble, executive director of the program. “Think of the generations of families and millions of students the spelling bee has positively impacted throughout its history. What started as a quaint contest with nine students has flourished into a national treasure where hard work is recognized and rewarded, and the lessons learned can last a lifetime.”

The spellers are among the top 0.000026 percent of more than 11 million students who initially participated in spelling bees held in classrooms, schools and local sponsored events. They come from all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Department of Defense Schools in Europe. Eleven spellers represent the Bahamas, Canada, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan and South Korea.

The spellers range in age from 6 to 15. Seventy-three spellers previously competed in the national finals. Twenty-nine spellers have relatives who previously participated in a combined 51 Scripps National Spelling Bees.

The 2017 Scripps National Spelling Bee will take place May 30-June 1 at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in Oxon Hill, Maryland. The Scripps National Spelling Bee and Kindle are working together to further the belief that reading, spelling and vocabulary are critically important to a child’s lifelong achievement.

“Before becoming a spelling expert, kids often start as avid readers. At Amazon, we’re committed to inspiring kids and families to become passionate about reading, which is why our Kindle e-readers include features like Kindle FreeTime, Word Wise and Vocabulary Builder, helping build confidence to take on more complex books and learn new and challenging words along the way,” said Arthur Van Rest, general manager, Kindle. “We’re excited to take part in helping Scripps National Spelling Bee celebrate 90 years.”

Activities for all participants in the Bee this year:

- The traditional Memorial Day picnic will take place at Nationals Park, home of the Washington Nationals, the city's Major League Baseball franchise.
- Monday night's opening ceremony will be a celebration of the history of Bee champions.
- Kindle Corner returns for spellers and families. The interactive space provided by Kindle features a lounge area to relax and read a favorite book; an alphabet soup foam pit reserved just for kids; and a Kindle wall that will showcase customized book covers created for each of the champion spellers.
- The Spellebrity Video Contest Premiere returns for its second year to recognize the creativity of young video producers. Five Finalist teams won expenses-paid trips to the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Held Tuesday evening, this event showcases the teams' videos. The spellers will vote for their favorite video, and each member of the winning team will win a prize of \$1,000 and a trophy.
- The Scripps National Spelling Bee has a robust plan for sharing the competition and behind-the-scenes excitement with [Twitter](#) competition posts and [Facebook Live](#) reports. Fans of the Bee also can engage on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and Snapchat (scrippsbee).
- The Bee posts daily photos to [Flickr](#) during Bee Week. The photos are searchable by speller number. Use 2017speller10 to get Grace Jones from New Carlisle, Indiana. Please give photo credit to: Mark Bowen/Scripps National Spelling Bee.

The Bee on ESPN:

For the 24th consecutive year, ESPN and its family of channels will provide coverage of the Bee with hosts Kevin Negandhi, Paul Loeffler and Michele Steele. Spellers will take to the stage for the first time on Wednesday, May 31.

- Preliminaries from 8 a.m. to about 12:15 p.m. EDT (streamed live on the [ESPN App](#)).
- Preliminaries and announcement of Finalists from 1:15 p.m. to about 6:15 p.m. EDT (streamed live on the ESPN App).

The Finals will take place on Thursday, June 1.

- Finals 10 a.m. to about 2 p.m. EDT (watch live on ESPN2).
- Finals continue 8:30-10:30 p.m. EDT (watch live on ESPN).

"Bee" Informed:

The redesigned [spellingbee.com](#) offers information about the spellers, the Bee's history, the Bee Blog and a sample test. During Bee Week, the website also will feature round results and regular competition updates.

Each year, the Scripps National Spelling Bee evaluates its program and welcomes feedback from fans and constituents for the consideration of rule changes. These are the significant new rules for 2017:

- Bee officials will administer a Tiebreaker Test to all spellers remaining in the competition at 6 p.m. on Thursday, June 1. The test will consist of 12 spelling words, which spellers will handwrite, and 12 multiple choice vocabulary questions.
- If it becomes mathematically impossible for a single champion to emerge victorious through the administration of a maximum 25 consecutive rounds involving three or fewer spellers, Bee officials will disclose the Tiebreaker Test scores of the remaining spellers. The judges will declare the speller with the highest score the Champion. In the event of a tie for the highest Tiebreaker Test score, the judges will declare the spellers with the tying highest scores co-Champions.
- For the spelling portion of the Preliminaries Test, spellers will handwrite their spellings on Bee-formatted test forms, which will be hand-graded. In the past several years, the Bee used computerized forms for the entire test.

- [Merriam-Webster Unabridged](#) is the official source of words for the Bee. The previous official source was “Merriam-Webster’s Third New International Dictionary.”

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all of their lives. Visit spellingbee.com for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

About Scripps:

[The E.W. Scripps Company](#) (NYSE: SSP) serves audiences and businesses through a growing portfolio of television, radio and digital media brands. Scripps is one of the nation’s largest independent TV station owners, with 33 television stations in 24 markets and a reach of nearly one in five U.S. households. It also owns 34 radio stations in eight markets. Scripps also runs an expanding collection of local and national digital journalism and information businesses, including satire and humor video and web brand [Cracked](#), podcast industry leader [Midroll Media](#) and over-the-top video news service [Newsy](#). Scripps also produces television shows including “[The List](#)” and “[The Now](#)” and runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C. Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto, “Give light and the people will find their own way.”

About Amazon

Amazon is guided by four principles: customer obsession rather than competitor focus, passion for invention, commitment to operational excellence, and long-term thinking. Customer reviews, 1-Click shopping, personalized recommendations, Prime, Fulfillment by Amazon, AWS, Kindle Direct Publishing, Kindle, Fire tablets, Fire TV, Amazon Echo, and Alexa are some of the products and services pioneered by Amazon. For more information, visit www.amazon.com/about and follow [@AmazonNews](https://twitter.com/AmazonNews).

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