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NEWS RELEASE

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NM Public Education Department Announces Grand Prize Winners of 2016 New Mexico True Summer Reading Challenge

More than 1,100 Students Read more than 13,000 Books

SANTA FE, NM – Today, the New Mexico Public Education Department announced the grand prize winners of the 2016 New Mexico True Summer Reading Challenge, a program that encourages kids to read over the summer. This year, more than 1,100 New Mexico elementary school students read more than 13,000 books.

“New Mexico elementary school kids worked very hard this summer to stay on top of their reading skills before heading back to class, and we’re very proud of them,” New Mexico Secretary of Education Hanna Skandera said. “I’m also grateful to all our community partners for their commitment to helping our kids learn to read, and we’re very proud to announce all these exciting prizes today.”

The New Mexico True Summer Reading Challenge encourages elementary school students across New Mexico to read over the summer for fun and exciting prizes. The 2016 New Mexico True Summer Challenge started on May 9 and ended July 31, and was open to every student ages 5 to 12 enrolled in a New Mexico elementary school. [Yesterday](#), Governor Martinez announced Pauline Sanchez as the top prize winner of an all-expenses-paid trip to Disney’s Animal Kingdom in Orlando, Florida.

Every participant who submitted a reading log with at least 6 books will receive a New Mexico True bookmark and a certificate recognizing their accomplishment. Readers who submitted a reading log completed with twelve books read, as well as short essay on “Why I Love New Mexico” also had their names entered in the random drawing to receive one of several grand prizes.

The grand-prize winners announced today are:

- **An all-expense-paid family vacation to Disney’s Animal Kingdom in Orlando:**
 - Pauline Sanchez, 6th Grade, Edgewood Middle School in Edgewood

- **Hot air balloon ride with Governor Martinez and First Gentleman Chuck Franco, along with four tickets to the Albuquerque Balloon Museum:**
 - Violet DeMoss, 4th Grade, John Baker Elementary School in Albuquerque
 - Erika Kelemen, 5th Grade, Gonzales Community School in Santa Fe
- **An adventure as a junior zookeeper for a day at the ABQ BioPark Zoo:**
 - Allen Penick, 2nd Grade, New Mexico International School in Albuquerque
 - Nevaeh Jones, 3rd Grade, Rudolfo Anaya Elementary School in Albuquerque
 - Marisol Maestas, 1st Grade, Penasco Elementary School in Penasco
 - Brianna Sanchez, 2nd Grade, Sunset Elementary School in Roswell
- **Meet a Lobo head basketball coach, receive free tickets to a Lobo basketball game, take part in a center-court ceremony at WisePies Arena aka the Pit, and receive an autographed Lobo basketball:**
 - Tyler Suazo, 5th Grade, McCurdy Charter School in Espanola
 - Nevaeh Van Swearingen, 3rd Grade, Carinos Charter School in Espanola
 - Brooklyn Maestas, 3rd Grade, San Antonito Elementary School in Sandia Park
- **Meet an Aggie head basketball coach, receive free tickets to an Aggie basketball game, take part in a center-court ceremony at The Pan-Am Center, and receive an autographed Aggie basketball:**
 - Sol Valdespino, 1st Grade, MacArthur Elementary School in Las Cruces
 - Laryssa Gyles, 2nd Grade, Loma Heights Elementary School in Las Cruces
 - Krystal Yalket, 6th Grade, Zia Middle School in Las Cruces
- **Four tickets to the 2016 New Mexico State Fair, and four tickets to one of the fair's concert and rodeo events at Tingley Coliseum:**
 - Kaya Krupa, 3rd Grade, Turquoise Trail Charter School in Santa Fe
- **A two-night stay for four people at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort, four round-trip rides on the Sandia Peak Tramway, and a meal for four at Duran Central Pharmacy:**
 - Mia Greenhalgh, 1st Grade, Sunset View Elementary School in Albuquerque
- **A two-night stay at the Drury Plaza Hotel in Santa Fe and private art lesson by Sean Wells:**
 - Xavier Watson, 3rd Grade, Montezuma Elementary School in Albuquerque
- **A two-night stay at Auslander Condominiums and two-day rental and lift passes at Red River Ski Area:**
 - Cate Broderick, 4th Grade, North Star Elementary School in Albuquerque
- **A one-night stay in the historic casitas at Elephant Butte Lake and an all-day pontoon boat rental:**
 - Erika Basurto, 1st Grade, Lowells Elementary School in Albuquerque
- **A two-night stay for two at Ghost Ranch Education and Retreat Center:**
 - Gwen Matthews, 3rd Grade, Mountain Elementary School in Los Alamos
- **A one-night stay at the Express Saint James Hotel in Cimarron with a Sunday brunch, a lantern tour of Old Town, admission to the Aztec Mill Museum, a tour of the Villa Philmonte, and a guided tour of Kit Carson Museum:**
 - Eleanor Williams, 2nd Grade, Union Street Elementary School in Las Vegas

- **A one-night stay at the Express Saint James Hotel in Cimarron with dinner, and a guided tour of Cimarron:**
 - Jerome Gutierrez, 4th Grade, Khopo Community School in Espanola
- **Admission for a family of four to McCall’s Pumpkin Patch:**
 - Mateo Madrid Larranaga, 1st Grade, Montezuma Elementary School in Albuquerque
- **A National Park Service Pass for admission at all National Parks:**
 - Alize Rodriguez, 3rd Grade, Nancy Lopez Elementary School in Roswell
 - Amy Gutierrez, 1st Grade, Nancy Lopez Elementary School in Roswell
- **A U.S. Forest service backpack, fanny pack, flashlight, water bottle and one Interagency Annual Pass that allow access to federal recreational lands managed by participating federal agencies:**
 - Christopher Vargas, 2nd Grade, Sunset Elementary School in Roswell
 - Maurisio Munguia, 3rd Grade, Sunset Elementary School in Roswell
- **A guided tour of Los Alamos and visit to the Los Alamos History Museum:**
 - Gala Nelson, 3rd Grade, Mountain Elementary School in Los Alamos
- **Three day tour of Clayton and Union Counties, one night lodging each at the Eklund Hotel and the Holiday Motel:**
 - Jackie Miranda, 4th Grade, Mesa Elementary School in Clovis

Ten readers won a State park pass, good for one year at any of New Mexico’s 35 State Parks. Eight readers won a family passes to the New Mexico Museum of Space History in Alamogordo. Two hundred readers will receive Cultural Passes good for admission to 16 New Mexico state museums and historic sites.

The prizes for the 2016 New Mexico True Summer Reading Challenge are made possible by the State of New Mexico and its partnership with: the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, Comcast Internet Essentials, the University of New Mexico Athletic Department, the New Mexico State University Athletic Department, the City of Albuquerque, the Albuquerque BioPark, the Los Alamos History Museum, the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort and Spa, Auslander Condominiums, the Cimarron Chamber of Commerce, Drury Plaza Hotel in Santa Fe, Duran Central Pharmacy, KRSN Radio, Sean Wells Artist and Designer, Legends by Lantern Light, Clayton-Union County, Ghost Ranch, Lago Rico Inc., Red River Ski and Summer Area, X-treme-lee Fun Balloon Adventures, the New Mexico Museum of Space History, and Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway.

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