

Student Writing Contest Celebrates Mayflower Anniversary

Four hundred years ago this week, the Mayflower was in the middle of the wave-tossed Atlantic, four weeks into its journey. The 130 passengers and crew were looking ahead to a new life in the New World. It would be another five weeks before they sighted land—the outer shore of Cape Cod.

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's arrival, local author Hannah Carlson is sponsoring a writing contest for Cape Cod students. The essay contest asks student to convey, in 400 words or less, "Four Reasons I'm Thankful for America."

"Kids like to be involved in events, and the 400th Anniversary of the Pilgrims' landing is a chance for kids to think deeply about why they're grateful for our beautiful country," she said in an email. "Some families might have lived here for just a year, others for generations, but all can ponder

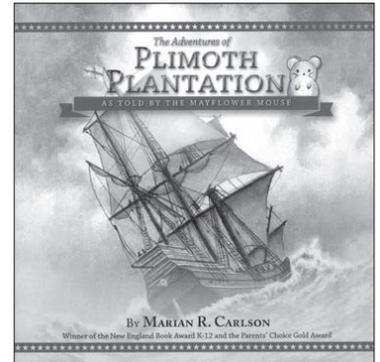
many reasons for gratitude which started with the first Thanksgiving in 1621."

Pilgrim leader William Bradford kept a journal that famously chronicled the settlers' adventures. He also wrote about his gratitude, something students – who are probably familiar with the cold, hunger and other dangers the settlers faced – could emulate, she said.

The contest is open to all Cape Cod students in public and private schools as well as those who are home schooled. Essays will be judged on thoughtfulness, writing skills and specific examples. Artwork is welcome. The deadline is Nov. 4 at 4 p.m. Winners will be announced on Nov. 9, the old-style date of the time the Mayflower headed south off Chatham but turned around due to dangerous shoals.

Awards will be made in grades 1 to 4, 5 to 8, and 9 to 12. In each grade group, first place will be awarded \$100 and second place \$50. Winning stories will be published in The Cape Cod Chronicle and at SchoolmasterPress.com. Each winner will also receive a signed copy of Carlson's book about the Mayflower anniversary, "The Adventures of Plimoth Plantation As Told By The Mayflower Mouse." The first 10 submissions will win a free electronic edition of the book. Tips on writing a journal can be found under the activities section at www.MayflowerMouse.com.

Entries can be sent to Protect Our Past, Box 606, North Chatham, MA, 02650 or emailed to carlson@SchoolmasterPress.com.



Author Hannah Carlson is sponsoring a student writing contest to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower's voyage, which she writes about in her new book, "The Adventures of Plimoth Plantation As Told By The Mayflower Mouse."