



News

# UM-Dearborn hosts Young Authors' Festival celebrating the 150th birthday of Henry Ford

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By AARON YNCLAN, Staff Writer

University of Michigan-Dearborn played host to the *Young Authors' Festival* this past Saturday, November 23. Organized by several committee members and various campus departments, the event celebrated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Henry Ford with author Carol Hagen and illustrator Matt Faulkner.

"Our idea was to bring in an author and an illustrator from a children's book to talk to the audience about the process of writing and illustrating, with breakout sessions with activities for children and a presentation for parents about how they can help foster and encourage writing for their children," said Barbara Kriigel.

This festival was a revival of a similar event held many years ago, and was originally slated to take place in 2014 before it was pushed ahead due to thematic decisions.

"Our initial thought was that we would do this in fall of 2014, but in looking for an author and illustrator to highlight and in thinking of a theme for the festival, we realized that this was the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Henry Ford's birth," said Mrs. Kriigel. "And as it so happens, we already knew Matt Faulkner and he had happened to illustrate a book called "The Night Henry Ford Met Santa," and as we looked



Displays for the Young Authors' Festival

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further into it we realized that the author (Carol Hagen) was one of our alumni. [The elements] just kind of came together, and that's why we're doing it this fall."

"The Night Henry Ford Met Santa" is a beloved children's novel, and follows Ford's dream of creating an affordable automobile for the public. This theme was further utilized for the festival through a writing contest in which children from across the state took part. For students' grades 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, the contest required them to write a poem, narrative, or essay about their dreams and how they intend to accomplish them. Almost 200 entries were submitted, and the winners from each grade are to be submitted to the Michigan Reading Association's *Kaleidoscope* magazine.

In addition, an exhibition tied to the festival is currently on display in the Alfred Berkowitz Gallery on the second floor of the Mardigian Library.

"One of things we thought we could do was to highlight the illustrator's works," said Mrs. Kriigel. "I talked to Mr. Faulkner and he provided us with a lot of the drawings that made up the book 'The Night Henry Ford Met Santa,' but he also gave us illustrations from some of our other books as well. And as we started working on this exhibition, we realized that a lot of his artwork isn't necessarily framed, so Prof. DeFauw (College of Education, Health, and Human Services) knew of some professors at Oakland University who collect original artwork of children's books, and they kindly loaned us some pieces [for the exhibition]."

In addition to displaying the artwork of various children's books, the gallery also features certain novels (including *Cinderella* and *Harry Potter*) in various languages and shows how they are presented and interpreted in different cultures (i.e., Cinderella's glass slippers become gold sandals in some cultures).

The collection will be on display until Friday, December 13, and is open to the public.

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