



Perris News

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Perris Poetry Slam Promotes Young Poets

The Perris City Council Chambers became the scene of a poetry reading put on by a trio of young artists who make their living reciting original verses about love, life and loss.

In what was billed as the first event of its kind for Perris, poets Deborah Wiggins, Emanuelee Bean and Jeremyah Payne spent more than an hour discussing and reciting poetry written individually or in collaboration.

Eagle's Wings Christian Church and Eagle's Wings Community Outreach organized the event and City officials made the Council chambers available for the audience.

"You will be charmed and provoked by some young people who represent our best college graduates," said Patricia Wiggins, a member of the Eagle's Wing congregation and the mother of Deborah Wiggins. "I want to thank the City of Perris for making this venue available. The purpose is to give a venue to young people who are story tellers and writers."

The trio who recited at the Council chambers is based in Houston and is part of a competitive poetry team. Deborah Wiggins, 25, is a graduate of Perris High School and the University of Michigan. Bean, 24, and Payne, 26, are graduates of Prairie View A&M University.

They also serve as mentors to a youth poetry team that was recently in Los Angeles as part of a nationwide competitive poetry recital that featured 55 teams.

Competitive poetry, known as "slam poetry," requires individual or a group of poets to recite an original composition during a 3-minute 10-second time limit.

The recital in Perris gave Wiggins, Payne and Bean the opportunity to polish new poems and practice delivering compositions written months ago.

Over the course of 30 minutes, the trio recited poems with themes that including overcoming crippling illnesses, the legacy of war on soldiers and military recruiters and life in urban America. Wiggins said she and her colleagues travel the country reciting poetry at colleges, nightclubs, churches, schools, corporate-sponsored events and at non-profit venues.

"I love performing," Bean said. "It's important to me to get our stories out and to give young people a different way to express themselves."

Wiggins, who published her first poetry at age 19 and visited 25 cities in the last year entertaining crowds as a performance artist, said her goal is to increase literacy among young people while highlighting "talent, creativity and expression as a traveling poet."



Performance poets Deborah Wiggins, Jeremyah Payne and Emanuelee Bean recite their poem, "The Recruiters," at the Perris City Council Chambers.



Deborah Wiggins, who performs under the professional name "DEEP," said she brings passion and intensity to her art.



Patricia Wiggins, a member of Eagle's Wings Community Outreach: "You will be charmed and provoked."