

Ashley Gettelfinger, a 15 year old sophomore at North Harrison High School, won a brand new 2009 Ford Focus as the grand prize in the school's Character in Education program, held Friday afternoon at the school's football field. Ten tickets were drawn for the car prize, and each of the ten finalists was given a key to try in the car's ignition. The winning student would of course be able to start the car's ignition.

Gettelfinger was the ninth of 10 students who tried for the prize.

The program allows students to add tickets to a pot for things such as high grades, perfect attendance, or having no disciplinary referrals.

A total of 12,396 tickets through the year were in the pot from the year.

The nine students who were finalists for the car were given nice consolation prizes, such as a lap top computer, which was won by senior Katie Tekulve. Besides the car, which was donated by Jim Hodge, owner of Heritage Ford Mercury in Corydon, another 59 sponsors donated prizes, such as an iPod, a Nintendo video game, a class ring, and others. Approximately \$6,700 in prizes besides the car was given away in the program this year. "The sponsors have been more than gracious," said North Harrison High School assistant principal Doug Dodge.

The program is in its third year, and has proven to be very effective, according to Dodge. He said that a few years ago, it was obvious that things needed to change.

As Dodge put it, "Year after year, we were doing the same punishments for the same infractions. Nothing was getting better."

"It all comes back to character," he explained. It was decided to try to add some positive reinforcement in a big way.

Dodge said that education itself doesn't "guarantee character," and added "Wall Street proved that fact. Character is the choices you make."

Three years into the program, Dodge thinks that the program has impacted North Harrison for the better.

"It's making a big impact in our school," Dodge said. "We really try to stress choices and character almost every day."

Dodge said that the businesses that donate prizes for the program will see a return of sorts for their investment in the program. He said that the Character in Education program will help create more ethical employees for the very businesses that donated.

"These are their future employees. (It helps create) the values you're looking for," he said.

Join St. Mary of the Knobs to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in style! Their 4th Annual Reverse Raffle is set for Friday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. Only 100 tickets sold in increments of \$100, \$50, and \$25. Total cash prizes of \$5,500 – even losers have a second chance to win!