

For Immediate Release

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LOCAL PLAYWRIGHT FINISHES IN THE TOP FIVE IN NATIONAL CONTEST

Springfield, IL - The Columbia Entertainment Company in Columbia, MO has announced its top five winners in the Jackie White Memorial Play Writing Contest. Kari Catton, Springfield, IL has won an Honorable Mention for her play, *Healin' Home*.

The contest, founded in 1988 as the Jackie White Memorial Play Writing Contest, is a playwriting contest that seeks to encourage playwrights to write quality plays for family audiences. The prestigious annual contest has come to be known at a national level as a contest that supports the development and production of children's theatre plays.

Jackie Bromstead White, herself a playwright, a Columbia native and former head of Rock Bridge High School's Drama Department, was instrumental in the early success of the contest. She created guidelines for contest play-readers on how to judge plays which is still utilized today. All play submissions are read by at least three readers. The final five are read by eight panelists of judges. A scene is chosen from each of the five finalists to read aloud among the judges for discussion. Comments regarding *Healin' Home* was "truly moving."

The play is the story of three orphaned children who have run away from The Orphan Train in Central Missouri in 1910. They come upon the home of Jason and Sue Coley, who have lost their only daughter. Through a series of events, the longing for family and acceptance is felt by all and a new home and family is created. The panelists of judges remarked that this play would be enjoyed by audiences of all ages.

This is the play's first award. Kari Catton has won awards in other playwriting contests for other plays, including the Writer's Digest, Writing Competition, top ten plays for *The Track Home: The Orphan Train* in December, 2007, and a top finalist in the Alabama Ten-Minute Play Contest for *The One Born With a Veil*, August, 2004.

For more information, please contact Kari Catton at 217-899-9732.

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