

## Bookworm wins contest

Mike Latona/Catholic Courier

ROCHESTER — Apparently, the decibel level around Brian Beauchamp doesn't affect his ability to digest a good book. After all, how many people do you know who can read just as easily at a fireworks display as in a quiet library?

Others may have been oohing, aahing and covering their ears, but there was Brian last Fourth of July, nose buried in one of his many books during a family outing to the fireworks. That marked the epitome of Brian's obsession with reading, his father recalled. "He was taking books everywhere with him," Bob Beauchamp said.

There aren't too many 7-year-olds who would choose to spend their summer vacations that way. Brian not only read at the fireworks, he al-

so read many books at home and made a bunch of trips to the Rochester Public Library's Winton Road branch. His goal was to win a summer reading contest, "Hit the Books," cosponsored by the Buffalo Bills football team and United Parcel Service.

"I just heard about it and started reading like crazy," said Brian, who completed 78 books over a one-month period. Topping the list of his personal favorites were books from the Tacky series, which involve an offbeat penguin; and Amelia Bedelia books, which portray the misadventures of a housekeeper struggling with the English language.


Brian's efforts paid off as he won the Winton Library contest, earning two free tickets to a Bills game. But that was just the beginning. Not long afterward, Brian was informed he



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

Eight-year-old Brian Beauchamp, a student at Rochester's St. John the Evangelist School on Humboldt Street, sits among his many books at his Rochester home Jan. 16.



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was the grand-prize winner for the Rochester and Buffalo library systems. As a result, he was designated to carry the game ball out to midfield prior to the Oct. 27 Bills 24-17 victory over the Detroit Lions. His name was announced over the public-address system as he approached midfield, with many in the sellout crowd of 73,000 at Ralph Wilson Stadium looking on.

Brian recalled that as he left the field, he crossed paths with Bills players waiting to be introduced. "I got to high-five Nate Clements as they were coming out of the tunnel. He just walked over to me and put his hand out," Brian said.

Not only did Brian share that brief moment with the Bills' defensive star, he also had a close encounter with Buffalo's most prolific player. "Drew Bledsoe, he almost fell on top of me," Brian said. Would he have helped the quarterback to his feet? "Yes, but first I'd probably ask for his autograph," Brian said with his frequent freckle-faced smile.

Brian, who turned 8 on Dec. 11, is a second-grader at Rochester's St. John the Evangelist School on Humboldt Street. His family — which also includes his mother, Joan, and brothers Patrick, 10, and Daniel, 4 — belongs to St. John the Evangelist Parish.

In addition to his fondness for reading, Brian said that at school he enjoys "gym, definitely gym. I like gym and computers."

Brian has enjoyed the recognition sparked by his contest win. He brought in a recording of a television news clip of his game-ball presentation to show his class at St. John the Evangelist.

That tape has also been subject to frequent use at home. Asked how often he has watched the segment, Brian replied, "About a million times."

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